Issue #85 | Spring 2018

We Are All Connected

In this issue:

• Seeing Through Music • All Around This World •
• Ukuleles • Framing Our Songs •

IN THIS ISSUE: We Are All Connected

Seeing Through Music: Songwriting at the Maryland School for the Blind

All Around This World

Music With Children Who Have Experienced ACES

I Love My Fluke

Ten Things I Love About You, Kulele

Departments

Letter From the Editor

New Sounds

Reports

Presidents' Message

Conference Reflections
by Tim Seston
by Jenny Murphy

Conference Keynote:
Ken Whiteley

2017 Magic Penny Award

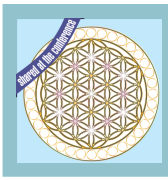
Spotlight on Outgoing Board Member

Songs

We Are All Connected
Sue Straw

A Beaver
Jean Young

Come Join in the Circle
Sarah Pirtle



On and On
Kari Thomas Kovick

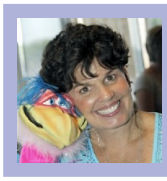
Patas en al Aire
Ben Gundersheimer

We Sing for Peace
Bill Harley

When We Sing Together
Kim Wallach

Columns

Let's Talk Tech
In Search of the Wild Ukulele

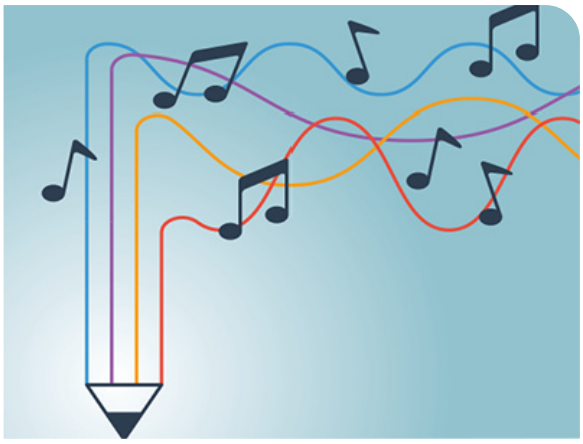


Music In Bloom
We Are All Connected

Pro Song
Passionate People Inspire Extraordinary Songs, Part II

Thoughts To Chew
Framing Our Songs

Letter From the Editor



Spring Forward

by Brigid Finucane

Last September, before school started, I attended a school in-service program where the facilitator presented a captivating series of images accompanied by the song, "We Are All Connected." After the workshop I searched for it on the Internet, and discovered, much to my delight, that member Sue Straw was the composer. Thus the theme for this issue was born and is so gloriously extended in our "Seeing Through Music" and "All Around This World" features, "Music in Bloom" and "Thoughts to Chew" columns, and *five* of the seven songs!

A chance comment from Susan Salidor, my perennial conference roommate, along the lines of "there should be an article about ukuleles" elicited the second theme. Susan and Amy Conley offer compelling—and sometimes humorous—reasons for adding this instrument to your life, while Alina Celeste provides invaluable direction for how to actually play it in her fascinating column on YouTube resources, "In Search of the Wild Ukulele." Fair warning: Once you go down the rabbit hole, it may be hours before you return! Clicks beget clicks beget clicks!

The Presidents' Message is an inspiring must-read, and conference reflections are not to be missed. Kayte Deioma's photos are a perfect harmony to the openhearted tributes given by our writers, and illustrate why each and every CMN member should make it a priority to attend these seminal gatherings.

It's a wonderful issue. Read it, enjoy it, and of course, *pass it on!*

And now for my news. This is my last issue as *PIO!* editor. I'm thrilled to announce that Ginger Lazarus, *PIO!*'s copy editor, will take over the position. Ginger is a writer, teacher, editor, and singer whose combination of insight, humor, and commitment to CMN will make *PIO!* sing. She will be assisted by Heather Taylor, *PIO!*'s new copy editor.

Three years ago I had the privilege of assuming the editorship of *PIO!* Since then, with the support of CMN's Board, Jane Arsham, *PIO!* Advisory Board (Yes, there is one! Thank you, Bonnie Lockhart, Sally Rogers, Joanie Calem, and Nancy Silber), *PIO!* staff, and our member writers, an enterprise that I barely comprehended has matured from its first brave digital iteration (constructed by Caroline Presnell and Carl Foote) into a beautifully realized online journal celebrating the talents of CMN's membership. My BOD liaison, Susan Salidor, and my husband, Will Hornsby, also served a key role, providing support and clarity at decisive moments.

The stars aligned to bring together a staff that not only worked well together but liked and appreciated each other's sense of humor and communication styles. It helps enormously that each of these gifted collaborators is an independent and far-reaching thinker who strives to improve not only the content but the look and delivery of the journal. Hats off to Ginger Lazarus, copy editor; Kim Arden, graphic designer; and Carl Foote, webmaster.

The journal's infrastructure is not often celebrated, but here are *some* of the changes the staff has made to enhance the reading experience:

- Creation of issue themes and stylistically connected cover imagery
- Inclusion of a slide-out **Table of Contents** (TOC) indicated by a book icon
- Development of distinct three-column TOC template for **Columns** and **Songs**
- Elevation of **Departments** and **Reports** to the top of the TOC
- Addition of icons and author attributions to **Songs** in the TOC
- Design of badges for CMN Anthems and songs performed at annual conferences
- Creation of sharing buttons for Facebook and Twitter
- Unlocking of content, with everything except songs now available to non-members

The editorial staff committed to selecting stories that drew from CMN's collective wisdom, highlighted its history, upheld its social justice focus, and examined the many distinct issues of working with children musically. Like those before us, we mined riches from *PIO!*'s past issues and instituted new directions, like Alina Celeste's **Let's Talk Tech** column and the semiregular **Resources for Renewal.**

Our generous columnists consistently contribute engaging and thought-provoking pieces that I find myself referring to on a regular basis. Val Smalkin deserves extra recognition for not only serving as CMN's co-president, but as *PIO!* **Songs** editor, columnist, and feature writer.

What's on my horizon? I'm not *really* retiring. Rather, I'm transitioning to the newly created volunteer position of "content advisor," and will continue to serve the journal in whatever way needed.

It's been an amazing journey. Thank you, all.

Seeing Through Music

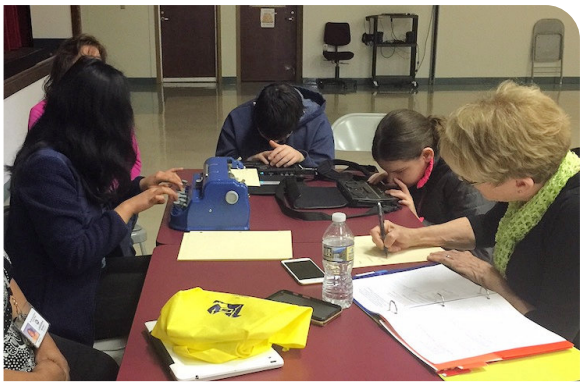
Songwriting at the Maryland School for the Blind

by Valerie Leonhart Smalkin

This is about six blind teens who bravely revealed their hearts in song, and by doing so gained the interest and contributions of award-winning musicians, writers, composers, engineers, and choruses across the nation.

It all started with CMN member Irene Light's idea to create a program for the Maryland School for the Blind (MSB) Statewide Outreach program. Irene is the Director of East Coast Productions for Theatre Arts Festival for Youth (TAFFY) (https://www.taffypresents.org/), a nonprofit organization that sends professional artists into underserved communities of children and families (https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/features/taffy-presents.aspx). In that role, and in conjunction with the social workers at MSB, Irene arranged for a single Saturday afternoon songwriting session for teens. The purpose of the session was to help those teens self-advocate and inform the sighted world about being blind. Irene asked me to do the program and I said sure, not knowing what a profound effect the program would have on the two of us and an ever-widening circle of good-hearted people.

At the original session, held in the open space "gymnatorium" at MSB, the teens said they want sighted people to have a better idea of what it's like to be blind. So I asked, "What is it like?" And the answers poured out:



(Photo by Susan Vanderhoff)

> It sucks.
> Being blind is horrible.
> Depressing,
> Being depressed is horrible.
>
> Having people look at you everyday…
> I don't know why they make me feel this way.
> You can feel their eyes on you.
>
> It's weird when you are standing there and someone's looking at you and you want to turn around.
>
> You feel like you stand out with a cane.

I gulped and asked, "So what do we need to do to get over that feeling?" Again, the teens were not hesitant with the answers:

> Write an anti-depression song
> Never give up
> Write a fight song—the greatest

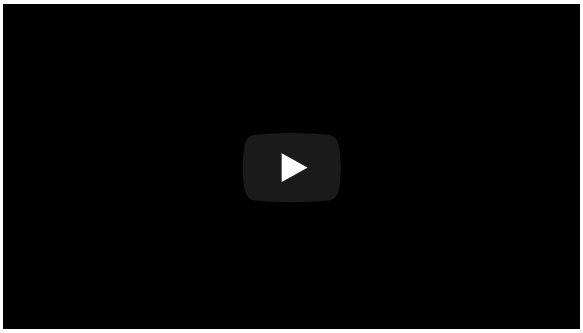
Support each other
Find support

There's a lot of things I can do,
In a different way…
Don't treat me like a baby!
Just because I'm blind doesn't mean I'm not capable of doing things other people can do. Some things even better.

Alex

Wow! Then something prompted Alex, mildly autistic and blind from birth, to talk about a great friend he had in eighth grade. His friend transitioned to a regular high school, while Alex came to MSB. He misses her terribly. They used to call every night, e-mail, and chat, but now he no longer hears from her. Alex became very agitated and sad, so much so that the social worker took him out to process his feelings on a one-to-one basis.

Meanwhile, Raiven, who is severely color-blind since age eleven, and will eventually lose more of her sight, was busy writing on her chair. When she finished she presented us with her interpretation of what Alex had been saying:



Move On
I need another friend.

No matter how far away you are
I'll care about you
No matter what you do

How about you
No, you never understand
The way I want to talk to you
I can't take this anymore
How can I format these words
Never wanting to know all I do
I never need to give up
I try my best
But I don't know if you understand
The way I care about you

I did not know Raiven well at that point, but later her characteristic shyness with the spoken word and stream-of-consciousness facility with the written word surfaced plainly. (If you watch the video below of Raiven playing bass clarinet, you'll note she would not let me video her face. I had to promise only to show the bell of the clarinet and her feet.)

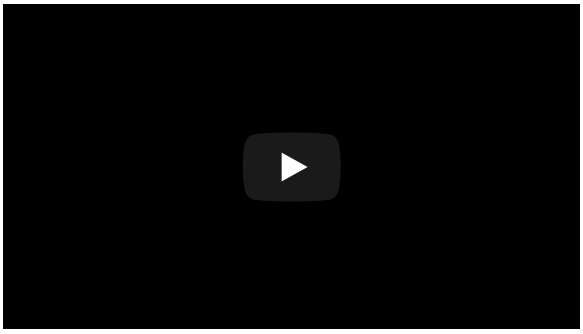
Raiven

Truthfully, the first session was not a great success from a songwriting point of view, but as to self-advocacy? It was surely a homerun. All six teens were anxious to tell the sighted world more about themselves. I left knowing I could not simply walk out of these students' lives after a single day. They were too vibrant, too in need of a voice, too lovely and caring.

That very evening, November 5, 2016, I went home and posted this on Facebook:

Okay! I need funding to get me back to the Maryland School for the Blind to help these wonderful students finish the song they

have started about how they feel and what they need sighted people to know about them. My yearlong plan is to get them in a studio to record their song. Anyone in? Either monetarily or time-wise?



The next day, a longtime friend anonymously donated $1,000 to TAFFY to pay for four return visits and the recording of at least one song. I was in heaven. Her faith in me made my heart grow ten sizes.

On December 12, 2016, Tatyanna, a student who had not attended the first session but heard about it, sent me this e-mail:

> Hi,
> It's Tatyanna.
> I have a few ideas on lines for the song.
> I was wondering if you could tell me what you think?
>
> People stare,
> back away scared,
> I try to act like the whispers don't bother me,
> I take a deep breath and count to three.
> Take a short walk around the neighborhood,
> You pretend to be my friend just so you can look good,
> I wipe away the tears,
> tell myself there is nothing to fear,
> because my friends and family are right here.

Tatyanna

I was blown away by Tatyanna's insightful line, "You pretend to be my friend just so you can look good." So I wrote back to ask her how she came to write and think that. Her heartbreaking response came that very same day.

> Thank you :)
>
> It started in middle school. Since I went to public school I always needed some extra help. It was mostly in gym that I needed the most help. I could run and do everything but I needed someone to tell me what way to go and where the ball was.
>
> My gym teachers would tell the class "whoever helps Tatyanna today will get extra credit." A few people would act like my friend so I would ask to be with them the next gym class. After a while people figured out that if you help the "blind girl" you get praised and everyone looks at you like you're some kind of hero. So, everyone in school would and still does act like my friend. At first, I really thought they were my friends but then I realized it was all an act. For example, in 7th grade a girl named Hannah pretended to be my friend. I thought she was the most amazing person. We did everything together. But, if I talked to her privately or outside of school she gave me the cold shoulder.
>
> In 8th grade, me and Hannah didn't have any classes together but I still saw her in the hallways and in the locker room and when I said hi or ask how she was doing she pretended not to hear me. Honestly at first, I thought she really didn't hear me, but it went on and on. She never answered me. She would continue to talk to

her friends like I didn't even speak. This type of situation happens all the time for me.

Taty attended the second songwriting session on January 21, 2017, and crafted the following stanza:

> I try to pretend the whispers don't bother me.
> I take a deep breath and count to three.
> People stare and back away scared.
> They use me, and abuse me, then throw me away.

During that same workshop the teens were forthcoming about things they "see" but not with their eyes. Raiven, at her usual place bent over a notebook on a chair writing furiously, distilled this from what the other students were saying:

> Blindness
> Some may say that it's a weakness
> but we know that is not true
> we will do
> we will see
> the truth behind beauty.
> We will know
> the hidden underlining meaning
> of truth
> the freedom
> of beauty.

> Why do you look at me at a far
> I'm no different than you are
> Why stare at me through fear
> I feel the same way that you do
> Though I may act different
> I am no different than any one of you are
> Treat me the same as you.
> ….
> Please, I beg of you not to stare from the distance you are
> Though I can't see who you are
> Though I can feel your personality though so far.

Sometimes I am tempted to correct Raiven's grammar, but I don't, because I have come to appreciate her particular way of speaking. Her mind rockets from idea to idea, words flowing without the restraints of grammar. It's beautiful to observe, and over the past year she has grown amazingly in her ability to craft prose poems. Recently she wrote:

> The ones without sight
> Are not the ones without the truth
> Rather the ones without the fright
> Of in which society sees

> The spirit of truth
> Is not shown through the gravest new trend
> Rather the light which shines bravely
> Throughout the hardships once faced

Let her words wash over you and feel their strength. Ideas like these resulted in the next version of "Not With My Eyes":

> **Hero** or **Not With My Eyes**
> So, you want to look good,

And be a hero
You pretend you're my friend
When to you I am zero.

So, I take a deep breath and count to three
And pretend your pretense doesn't bother me.

Some people are scared
Some people will stare
Some people abuse me
And others will use me

But I've nothing to fear
I wipe off the tears
'Cuz family and friends
Are always right here.

But, you cannot wipe off
The truth of your lies.
I see to your soul
And not with my eyes.

So, I take a deep breath and count to three
And pretend your pretense doesn't bother me.

But, you want to look good,
Appear kindly and wise
But I see your sad truth
And not with my eyes.

As we developed these ideas further and decided to add a more positive section, "Not With My Eyes" evolved to this:

Not With My Eyes

Not With My Eyes
Words by MSB Song Writing Workshop
Music and Arrangement by Valerie Smalkin
©2017 Small Kin Music

Can't see the light, but I see clearly
Nothing in sight, yet I see clearly,

You want to be a hero.
Pretend you're my friend.
I know you think I'm zero.
Worth nothing in the end.

So I take a deep breath, count to three,
Pretend your pretense doesn't bother me.
But the truth of your lies isn't easy to hide.
I see your truth, but not with my eyes.

Some folks are scared, and
Some folks will stare and
Some will abuse me,
But you! You use me.

So I take a deep breath, count to three
And know your pretense doesn't bother me.
For the truth of my life isn't easy to hide.
I see your soul, but not with my eyes.

I see you in a different light.
I see you with a different sight.
I see you and I understand.

So I take a deep breath, count to three
And know your pretense doesn't bother me.
'Cuz the truth of our lives isn't easy to hide.
I see your heart, but not with my eyes.

So I take a deep breath, stand with pride,
Look at you, understanding why,
You are limited by the things you see.
You don't have the gift
That was given to me, that was given to me.

Maybe I'm blind, but I see clearly
Where there's no love, I will love dearly.

To tell the truth, I composed the music for "Not With My Eyes" and quickly recorded a rough copy so that I would have at least one song done and could stop worrying. But there was no need to worry. Over the next year, the MSB students wrote two more absolutely amazing songs: "The Dance of Freedom" and "Lifeboat to Sanity."

"The Dance of Freedom," recorded in February 2018, has a marvelous genesis. One day I asked the students to get up and dance in the open space we were working in. I asked them what it felt like. Alex responded, "Freedom!" And I knew we were on to something. The first title was "The Blind Dance of Freedom," but as the lyrics changed to include sighted as well as blind people, we dropped the word "blind."

These are the student's original lyrics that were later crafted into the song:

Why do you call beauty looks
I fear that I stand there and you stare
Can't tell where but why stare
Just come over and talk

And

We will conquer the world as one
We will be joyous and dance
A dance filled with freedom

We will unite the world as one
Although we know the world will be united
We may not even see our project
But we see the beauty in this life.
We will always know the truth
And beauty of the freedom
Of happiness.

The students took great delight in the double meaning that 1) they may not live long enough to "see" or experience the world united, and 2) even if they do, they will not "see" it visually as sighted people do. In the next several workshops we refined "The Dance of Freedom" to this:

The Dance of Freedom No. 2
Lyrics by: Alex, Julia, Grace, Raiven, Destiny, Brianna, and Val Smalkin

Chorus:
The world will be united
As we dance the Dance of Freedom.
Whether blind or whether sighted
We all dance the Dance of Freedom.

I feel your distant stare
I know that you are there.
Please come and talk to me
Let's try things differently.

We like to say we are not blind
But our eyes are on time-out.
Our ears work overtime you see
We hear and see things differently.

Chorus

You see with your eyes, I see with my mind.
I see with my ears, I see, though I'm blind.

This lack of sight does not make me weak
This lack of sight makes me unique.

But you, too, have that special thing
That gives you your own song to sing.
Our differences can make us strong
Our differences have built this song!

Chorus

Coda:
The dance of freedom is unity,
The dance of freedom is energy
So come and join the dance with me
Though we may do it differently.
Yes, come join the dance with me.
And where it takes us, we will see.

I sent the "Dance of Freedom" lyrics to Dave Kinnoin (http://songwizard.com/) and asked if he would set them to music. Bless his soul, he agreed. He and Jimmy Hammer not only wrote the music but also made an accompaniment track. With the permission of our students, Dave changed the order of the first lines of the chorus and asked if we could change the line "But our eyes are on a time-out." The students settled upon "we see with our hearts, our souls, our minds."

Student lyrics	**Edited**
The world will be united As we dance The Dance of Freedom. Whether blind or whether sighted We all dance The Dance of Freedom.	We will dance the dance of freedom, Whether blind or whether sighted. We will dance the dance of freedom, And our hearts will be united.
We like to say we are not blind But, our eyes are on time-out. Our ears work overtime you see We hear and see things differently	We like to say we are, we are not blind, We see with our hearts, our souls, our minds. Our ears work overtime, you see. We hear and see things differently

I suppose you are anxious to hear the song, and this is where the story gets even more amazing. Because "The Dance of Freedom" was about uniting

sighted and unsighted people, Irene and I thought getting another group to record would be great, and I remembered the West Los Angeles Children's Choir (http://www.mrsmusic.com/) from a wonderful video posted on the CMN forum. The choir is well known for recording "Prayers for the World" with Cher (for the documentary *Cries from Syria*), and appearing on a 2017 holiday Gap commercial. Irene had a connection—of course!

Oliver Kinnoin and Barbara Silberg

West Los Angeles Children's Choir at the Kinnoins'

After one phone call and a few e-mails back and forth, Barbara Silberg, the director of the West Los Angeles Children's Choir, agreed to teach her choir "The Dance of Freedom." Again Dave Kinnoin, Oliver Kinnoin, Mary Kincaid, Randy Sharp (http://randysharp.ws/index.html), and Jimmy Hammer came to the rescue by opening their homes and hearts to twenty-five children and parents. Dave's son, Oliver, provided the studio and recording expertise; Randy Sharp provided equipment: Dave's wife, Mary Kincaid, helped supervise; while Dave himself entertained the children with games outside and provided cookies. Mark Stocker (http://www.430entgroup.com/), another CMN member, mixed the version you will hear by clicking HERE! (https://www.dropbox.com/s/0oapl7fys9v5u3m/DANCE%20OF%20FREEDOM%20LA%20Choir%20Mix.mp3?dl=0)

The universal appeal of the MSB students' songs and the depth of their self-expression has led to donations of time and talent beyond my imagining. During this entire project, Kabir Sehgal (http://kabir.cc/), a children's author and jazz record producer who happened to like my book *Springtime Dance* (http://www.smallkinmusic.com/springtime-dance-sampler), has acted as my advisor. He also agreed to write the CD liner notes. Through Kabir, I met writer and lyricist Mike Greenly (https://www.mikegreenly.com/). Mike was so taken by the students' songs that he donated $1,500 to TAFFY to pay for the CD production and has contributed another $500 for publicity. And the list grows! Paul Avgerinos (http://studiounicorn.net/), composer of Grammy-winning music for spoken word pieces, opened his catalogue of music for us to use in any spoken word pieces we include in this project. Dirk Joseph (https://dirkjart.weebly.com/), a local Baltimore visual artist, is donating the CD cover art, which will include braille. Beth Blenz-Clucas of Sugar Mountain PR (http://www.sugarmountainpr.com/aboutus.html) is helping with publicity.

Of course, Dave Kinnoin jumped in at the very beginning as did Sahffi Lynne (http://www.sahffi.com/), another local Baltimore artist. And let's not forget twenty accessible MP3 players donated by Child's Play Charity (http://childsplaycharity.org/).

There is one more song to write about…but I'm going to save that for another day.

Keep in mind that you could reproduce this program in any school near you. Why not give it a try?

All Around This World

by Jay Sand

An Explorer With a Guitar

My personal road to teaching music to kids in my Philadelphia living room runs through Europe, Asia, and Africa. I've always been an explorer, always peering just over the horizon for the next thing to learn, and I always had a guitar in hand while doing it. When I was a junior in college I cut out for a semester and spent three months traveling in Europe on an unlimited Eurail pass, sleeping on trains wedged between other grubby backpackers. In that multilingual world, the guitar was better than a handshake. On train platforms, street corners, in questionable hostel cafes, travelers from everywhere would sing in full voice to what they called "American music"—the Beatles, the Stones, Bob Marley. After college I ventured to Southeast Asia, landing in Vietnam where I sang pop songs with ex-pats and jammed with Vietnamese metalheads. Later I journeyed to Africa to learn about the histories and cultures of communities that practice Judaism, bringing songs from Jewish Ghanaian shopkeepers, Jewish Ugandan farmers, and Jewish Zimbabwean railway clerks home to share with American Jews—who, by singing these songs, found a simple way to accept that such complicated communities exist.

I found through my travels that music was magic, the most basic way to connect. A song bulldozed boundaries. A song opened hearts.

> **"I found through my travels that music was magic, the most basic way to connect. A song bulldozed boundaries. A song opened hearts."**

I'd never considered playing music with little kids until I got a boost from the Buddha. My brother's friend was teaching at Sally's Music Circle (http://www.sallysmusic.com), a parent-child music program based in the Philly suburbs, when he answered the call to become a Buddhist monk. He left for the monastery and asked my brother to fill his spot. When Buddha kept calling, my brother kept teaching.

When my first daughter was a baby, I brought her to class at Sally's. My daughter giggled, I gushed. Music filled every one of us in the room. We sang full-bodied songs.

I knew music could blast borders between backpackers, but had never considered that singing would give me the chance to speak the same language as my child. The pathway had opened—now we could talk! I was hypnotized. I was hooked.

I soon became a Sally's Music Circle teacher and taught a class a week, then two, then more. As I trained, I marveled at the work visionary educators like

Kodály, Orff, Suzuki, and Edwin Gordon have done for a hundred years to enhance and value the music already present in children's lives. I dove into research by neuroscientists, psychologists, and all stripes of educators showing how music feeds a child's brain.

At home I was talking more and more to my daughter in songs. I was so eager to tell her about my adventures and all the ways I met the world. We began to play a game with a global map. She, in her then–three-year-old–ness, would point to a country. We'd take to YouTube, find songs from that place, and sing along. I took her on journeys each day. She was too young to understand, but she understood.

We were having too much fun, and learning too much, to keep our journeys to ourselves. I decided to fuse my teaching with my travels, sharing these musical explorations with other children in the neighborhood, by creating a program I called All Around This World (https://www.allaroundthisworld.com).

Singing Songs From Everywhere
My program is an interactive project for infants through nine-year-olds and their grown-ups to musically journey around the globe, singing, moving, and exploring different countries and cultures.

I knew building a complete world music curriculum for kids would be an honor, a challenge, and a chore. My goal was to craft an encompassing and inspiring resource: sourcing, translating, adapting, and thoroughly kid-testing family-friendly music from every inhabited continent. The process took four full years, and more. Even today I test and tinker. I'm always seeking another song.

With the world map as my guide, I divided the globe into ten general regions and constructed a three-month curriculum based on each: Latin America first, then Africa, South and Central Asia, and the Caribbean. After that, Eastern Europe, East and Southeast Asia, West Asia and the Middle East, Oceania and the Pacific, Western Europe and the Nordic countries, and last but not nearly least, the United States and Canada. To complete a three-year journey, I also created two cross-border units —"Everything Is a Drum," which celebrates the world's rhythms, and "Connecting the Dots," which solves mysteries that have musical themes.

Each time I set out to create a new season, I dispensed with whatever I thought I knew about a region's music and committed to starting from scratch. My mission was to keep my mind open as I listened to thousands of songs. I'd dive deep into research about the music traditions of a specific place, mapping the countries, cultures, and musical memes. I'd search for songs from the genres that told the countries' best tales. At first I thought I'd focus mainly on children's music, but I soon realized any song ever written could potentially be just right. YouTube enabled my listening tour, as did the mind-blowing resources of Smithsonian Folkways recordings (https://folkways.si.edu/), the Lomax tapes (http://research.culturalequity.org/home-audio.jsp), David Fanshawe's Polynesian collections (https://www.wyastone.co.uk/spirit-of-the-polynesia-david-fanshawe-pacific-trilogy-vol-1.html), Francis Corpataux's series of international children's songs (https://www.franciscorpataux.com/),

and of course the marvelous website, Mama Lisa's World (https://www.mamalisa.com/).

Even with almost unlimited sources, I still had to struggle to find the right songs. There's no fixed formula for an All Around This World song, but I know one when I hear one. The tune has to be a ray of light, with a chorus or "hook" kids can catch, but also a song that has roots in a people or place, a composition that resonates deeply. It may tell a story that's important in a country or have a melody a whole culture sings. It may be well known, a narrative everyone shares, or it could be the work of a contemporary writer who has channeled a homeland's heart. Beyond all that, it has to *work.* Each song in my class has an attached kinesthetic motion—patting, clapping, rocking, rowing, drumming, shaking eggs or clicking sticks, dancing in circles around the room. Each has to be fun and formidable, straightforward enough for the littlest kids to immediately sing along, yet with enough depth to make grown-ups think.

I'd make lists of hundreds of songs, then listen, listen, listen until I'd find about fifty songs that instinct told me would immediately connect with my little students—songs with a strong chorus, an intriguing narrative, an interesting time signature. From there I'd dig for translations—finding some on the Internet, some from multilingual friends, or, when necessary, actually hiring translators—then learn the music by ear, play along, and adapt. My goal for each song was to capture its essence, to maintain its musical soul, keeping the melody intact but mixing the original language with English so everyone would know what they sang.

> **"My goal for each song was to capture its essence, to maintain its musical soul"**

My final list for each season consists of twenty-five to thirty songs that come as close as I can muster to telling that region's tale. Each song plays a specific role in its region, mapping every kind of diversity—geographic, historical, cultural, linguistic, religious, and more. The list also is musically satisfying—including meaningful melodies and challenging time signatures, songs of many tempi and moods—and encourages movement of all types, from spin-around-the-room songs to sit and sway lullabies. (I'll always be grateful to Dr. Sally Weaver of Sally's Music Circle for giving every best kind of advice on building my repertoire.)

Atas Atas (Algeria)

For example, in the West Asia and Middle East season, there are songs from all over the region— Turkey to Iraq, Azerbaijan to Yemen, Saudi Arabia to Iran. There is music from both Israeli and Palestinian artists, songs from Turkish, Syrian, and Iraqi Kurds. We sing an Egyptian song about Bedouins traveling through the desert to find water, an Armenian song about a rollicking party, a Palestinian song about seeking the stars. There is an Azeri lullaby, a Kurdish lament about love, an Israeli plea for peace.

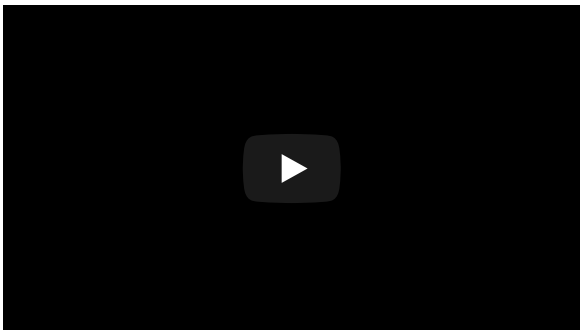
Beyond the Songs

Each week we learn something new. We "visit" a country and feature a special experience from that place—a Georgian supra (feast), an Iraqi belly dance, an introduction to the Hajj, or Muslim pilgrimage. Songs used to support our explorations, however, make multiple appearances over the course of a season, so that by the end, everyone can sing along. Families also have a CD that they can sing along with at home.

The musical structure I bake deeply into the curriculum is a structure I learned at Sally's Music Circle. Over three decades of teaching, Sally built upon a foundation of deep research into the way children learn. Classes start with our

hello song, "We Are Happy," a greeting song from Uganda, paired with a salutation from the featured country of the week. We begin sitting down and sing songs that are hand plays or lap bounces; we clap, we pat, we rock and row. After warming up our bodies and our voices, it's time to move! During our next song, we stand, dance a bit, fly, and swim. We stomp and jump around the room. After that I hand out instruments—shaker eggs, sticks, drums, tambourines—and sing a song that lets kids shake or drum or click. At this point, about a half hour along, the kiddos need a break, a chance to stop looking at me and play for a moment with parents or caregivers. So there might be unstructured time with scarves, a moment to master peekaboo. After scarves we lullaby or hand play, rouse ourselves for the week's "experience," then end with a triumphant free play—an abundance of percussion instruments strewn on the floor, or a bucket of pots and pans from the kitchen, or—most kids' favorite—a big bag of bouncy balls. We wind up with a reprise of "We Are Happy," and end with triumphant high fives.

If you're a teacher, you know that prep work is key. No matter what you teach, the deeper the foundation built by research, craft, and design, the better you know what you're going to share, and the more confidence you bring to your class. The point of all that preparation is not to wow the class with your knowledge, but to free yourself to be real.



The beauty of being with little kids is that wherever they are, they are *there*. A toddler who's dancing is in full-body dance; when she smiles it's a full-body smile. There's no split attention, no worry or woe…no future to fret, and no past. The kids are *there*, and when I'm able, I'm right there too. These are the moments when everything works. The music envelops the kids in the room; through it, together, we "speak." As we talk musically, the languages and rhythms and cultures sink deep.

Or at least that's what I believe. Teachers of the tiniest kids know the feedback is fast—when kids are happy, sunshine abounds. But in the long term, we can only have faith that the seeds we plant will bear fruit. We'll never know our impact, our role in their road, whether we've helped form their path. We dance and we sing and bring joy when we can. Beyond that, we only have hope.

What We Teach Our Children About the World Matters

In the years since I started All Around This World, I've taught over a thousand classes to kids and their families. I've traveled around the country playing concerts and presented music in libraries, community centers, and homeschoolers' living rooms. I've developed online classes and interactive lesson plans for teachers who want to teach kids global songs. Every time I teach I have the honor of seeing grown-ups do right by their children. Caring, insightful, bold parents abound. I sing with them every day.

And yet every day, our wide, wonderful world gets smaller. Parents know their kids are connected to everything all the time—born with an iPhone and an Internet chip. Our children are blessed to be the first of all time to grow up with access to all humanity's accumulated knowledge in the palm of the hand. They will also experience fewer and fewer barriers to connecting with people who live in other parts of the globe. I believe that introducing kids to the extraordinary riches of culture, traditions, and thoughts those far-off people

offer is the true "wealth of nations" that will prepare them for what will be an unavoidably international and interdependent future.

At the same time, such openness is scary, and some fight it for all they are worth. The future, the unknown, appears as a threat. The world turns beyond our control. Hatred and fear are simple to feel when we limit our perspective, our access to the world. Teaching kids tolerance from their very first days will ground them in peace and help them navigate the challenges that await.

> **"I believe that introducing kids to the extraordinary riches of culture, traditions, and thoughts those far-off people offer is the true 'wealth of nations'"**

We may "just" be teachers of the tiniest kids, not always granted respect, but many of us have a mission. We don't just show up in the classroom each day to help kids pass the time. We talk with kids through music, teach kindness, and seed hope. In All Around This World classes I sing and dance and play, and share my travels with kids to help build a better world.

The stakes are too high for us not to do this work. Everything depends on it.

Music With Children Who Have Experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)

by Alice Burba

> *Musick has Charms to sooth a savage Breast,*
> *To soften Rocks, or bend a knotted Oak.*
> – William Congreve

At the opening of William Congreve's seventeenth-century play, *The Mourning Bride*, Almeria is grieving the death of her lover, Anselmo. The curtain opens to soft music playing, and Almeria remarks, "Musick has Charms to sooth a savage Breast." Most misquote this phrase to read, "Music soothes the savage *beast*," correlating the phrase with the mythological three-headed creature, Cerebus, who was soothed by music. (J. K. Rowling revisited this in *The Sorcerer's Stone* when Harry Potter was able to sneak past Fluffy, the three-headed dog, by playing a flute that lulled Fluffy to sleep.)

While I would never refer to a child as a savage beast, occasionally children's behaviors begin to look that way. Anxiety in children can bring out those difficult-to-manage behaviors, and as it happens that anxiety is often felt in the breast or chest with a racing heart and shortness of breath. I will assert that a good tune can soothe beasts and breasts alike.

All too often we try to *manage* children's behaviors, whether in the home, classroom, or community, with tried and true methods such as taking away privileges, a swat on the bum, turning a card, no recess, etc. But how often do we consider what is behind the behavior and ask why the child is acting in this way? Understanding the origin of the behavior is often the key to addressing it. I once facilitated a training on behavior management where the curriculum stated "behavior is the language of emotion." It taught me that we have to *listen* to really understand the child.

That said, this can be a huge challenge. Children progress through numerous developmental stages and often don't have the vocabulary and coping skills to state, "I hit my sister because I'm angry that I didn't get to see my dad today." Children are often unable to recognize the emotions they are feeling and therefore can only express feelings through negative behavior (many adults don't have this skill either). If the caregiver or teacher understands that this child misses her father, they will take this into consideration when choosing a discipline. For example, they may choose to have her sit at the table quietly, with others nearby, rather than banishing her to her room, which compounds the feelings of separation.

Let's analyze behavior a little more deeply. In today's world, many children are exposed to traumas and experiences that impact their coping ability and overall mental and physical health, creating an environment of "toxic stress." Children then act out in response to this anxiety-filled environment. Since 1998, numerous groundbreaking studies on adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) have helped us to understand the short- and long-term effects of traumatic events during childhood and the toxic stress they create (CDC 2016 (https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/)).

> **"ACEs harm children's developing brains by changing how they respond to stress and damaging their immune systems so profoundly that the effects show up decades later."**

ACEs harm children's developing brains by changing how they respond to stress and damaging their immune systems so profoundly that the effects show up decades later. Studies show that over 64% of adults have had at least one adverse childhood experience, and 87% of those who have had one, have had two or more. Astoundingly, the more ACEs you have, the greater your risk for developing chronic disease or mental illness, perpetrating violence, and being a victim of violence later in life (CDC 2016 (https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/)). The data is overwhelming on the powerful long-term impact of childhood trauma, calling for *all* people who care for and work with children to become more trauma-informed in their approach.

The CDC-Kaiser Permanente ACE Study (https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/about.html) measures the impact of ten different types of childhood trauma using the following ACE score questionnaire. While there are many other types of childhood traumas, these were the most common traumas identified. Experiencing other types of toxic stress over months or years would likely further increase an individual's risk of health consequences.

Your ACE Score
Prior to your 18th birthday:

1. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often… Swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you? or Act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?
2. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often… Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you? or Ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?
3. Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever… Touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way? or Attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you?
4. Did you often or very often feel that… No one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special? or Your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?
5. Did you often or very often feel that… You didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you? or Your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?
6. Were your parents ever separated or divorced?
7. Was your mother or stepmother often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her? or Sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard? or Ever

repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?

8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs?
9. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide?
10. Did a household member go to prison?

Add up your "Yes" answers: _____
This is your ACE Score.

Source: *AcesTooHigh News* 2018 (https://acestoohigh.com/got-your-ace-score/)

When a young child experiences repeated trauma such as child abuse, neglect, domestic violence, etc., the child's brain and body produces an overabundance of the stress hormones cortisol and adrenaline, which in turn harm the functions of the developing brain. "If you're chronically stressed and then experience an additional traumatic event, your body will have trouble returning to a normal state. Over time, you will become more sensitive to trauma or stress, developing a hair-trigger response to events that other people shrug off" (*AcesTooHigh News* 2017 (https://acestoohigh.com/aces-101/)). Teachers see this regularly in the classroom when a child's behavioral response to a situation does not match the precipitating event. Our first response might be to say to the child, "You're overreacting!" but for a child whose brain and body is filled with toxic stress, the response is warranted. The child's ability to regulate their response is impaired.

There is hope, however. The website *AcesTooHigh News* states

> The good news is that the brain is plastic, and the body wants to heal. The brain is continually changing in response to the environment. If the toxic stress stops and is replaced by practices that build resilience, the brain can slowly undo many of the stress-induced changes. There is well-documented research on how individuals' brains and bodies become healthier through mindfulness practices, exercise, good nutrition, adequate sleep, and healthy social interactions (2018 (https://acestoohigh.com/aces-101/)).

"For children with ACEs, music has been proven to play a critical role through its unique ability to build resilience by fostering social-emotional development, promoting physical development and thinking skills, and nurturing language."

And musical interaction helps. For children with ACEs, music has been proven to play a critical role through its unique ability to build resilience by fostering social-emotional development, promoting physical development and thinking skills, and nurturing language. Zero to Three, an advocacy organization focusing on the welfare of babies and toddlers, offers these findings: "Singing a lullaby while rocking a baby stimulates early language development, promotes attachment, and supports an infant's growing spatial awareness as the child experiences her body moving in space" (Parlakian and Lerner 2016 (https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/1514-beyond-twinkle-twinkle-using-music-with-infants-and-toddlers)). Music can be quite magical in addressing and mitigating the stress-filled environment caused by childhood trauma.

Social-Emotional Development
One of the key outcomes of playing soothing music with babies and toddlers is that it develops self-regulation, the ability to manage one's emotional state

and physical needs. This is foundational for emotional heath. The well-placed lullaby or gentle humming as a caregiver rocks a child to sleep can act as a pivotal tool that brings calm to a child who is out of sorts. Over time, the child will learn to self-sooth if the caregiver has consistently and predictably nurtured the child.

Beat and rhythm also play a key role in soothing. A child in the womb is soothed by the mother's heartbeat. When a toddler is fussy, the caregiver often will pick that child up and gently bounce the child, unknowingly, to the same beat of a resting heart rate. The rhythmic nature of music naturally will trigger these same soothing responses through repeated patterns and musical structure. Many of today's mindfulness strategies incorporate music with 60 beats per minute (BPM) to simulate a resting heart rate, but rhythmic songs and nursery rhymes, regardless of BPM, are excellent tools for soothing and self-regulation. Indeed, just the act of listening to music has been found to reduce stress (Thoma et al 2013 (http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0070156)).

> **"To help children deal with adverse life experiences, we, as human beings, musicians, and teachers, must look at the whole child—socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively."**

More importantly, music provides healthy social experiences that can help fill in the gaps left by adverse childhood experiences. Marching around the room of the preschool, singing, or beating drums together encourages positive peer relationships. This shared joy of self-expression nurtures positive self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-efficacy.

Physical Development
When music pairs with movement, gross motor skills are engaged. It is always a delight to see a baby or toddler bouncing to the beat or swaying back and forth. Marching, skipping, twisting, jumping, and dancing will all hone and perfect gross motor skills. These movements to music can also help increase balance and spatial awareness. Fine motor skills are enhanced through doing fingerplays, holding scarves or instruments, and even plunking notes on a piano or playing a toy xylophone with mallets.

Certainly greater body awareness through exercise, action, or even mindfulness or meditative strategies yields positive physical outcomes. The benefits of music's influence on physical development can help nurture a healthy, active lifestyle, which can combat the long-term health effects of ACEs.

Cognitive Development: Thinking Skills and Language Skills
The cognitive developmental benefits of music are endless, but one of the most profound impacts is on memory. After all, most of us learned countless vocabulary words and simple facts through the use of music. Interestingly, trauma plays a key role in memory as well. When a traumatic event occurs, toxic stress hormones are released in the brain, often searing that experience in one's memory. This plays out in recurring memories that cause traumatic responses. In children this may be expressed as aggression (fight response) or withdrawal and dissociation (flight or hide response).

TIPS for Working With Traumatized Children

1. Create a safe space for children to experience music. A familiar setting with few distractions and plenty of room will help.
2. Structure and routine help reduce stress and anxiety. Try to use music at the same times during the day or within the same routines.

3. Because consistency and predictability are key, use the same transition song at the beginning and end of music time.

4. Use movement with the songs, but be sensitive to children who may be uncomfortable touching others or who may become anxious in crowded spaces.

5. Familiarity is comforting. Choosing songs the children know is a good place to start.

6. Build in calming or soothing songs, like lullabies or songs that support mindfulness.

7. Watch for cues that children may be feeling anxious and adjust accordingly. Children may become aggressive or may withdraw or "check out."

8. Be careful with song selection. Songs that talk about loving mothers may alienate the child who was abandoned. Songs that talk about traditional family may not translate for a child in foster care.

9. Building language skills can also serve to help children who suffer from ACEs by helping them express their feelings in positive ways. Children often act out their feelings rather than verbalize them. They just don't have the vocabulary. Music can help build that vocabulary, especially songs that teach about feelings. Rhythm also plays a role with thinking skills and language. Songs with a steady, consistent beat can assist with language fluency as well as cognitive focus.

To help children deal with adverse life experiences, we, as human beings, musicians, and teachers, must look at the whole child—socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively. Music, because of its powerful ability to impact the brain and body on multiple levels, also has the power to impact all of these developmental domains. Thus, music can be a pivotal strategy for trauma-informed care with children who have experienced childhood trauma.

If adverse childhood experiences become life's stumbling "rocks" or "knots," then Sir William Congreve provided us with excellent wisdom about the power of music to sooth the savage beast...or breast.

I Love My Fluke

by Susan Salidor

Anyone who knows me knows I love my Fluke (http://www.magicfluke.com/Fluke-Ukulele-Magic-Fluke-s/1477.htm). I've been playing my Fluke for over fifteen years and it is the only ukulele I recommend.

What is a Fluke? It is a redesigned ukulele made in the United States by the Magic Fluke Company (https://www.magicfluke.com), designed by Dale and Phyllis Webb. Phyllis happens to be the sister of Jim Beloff, a world-renowned ukulele player and enthusiast. Some of you might own one of his fabulous songbooks for ukuleles, including *The Daily Ukulele* (http://www.dailyukulele.com/dailyukulele365/index.html).

Here's how I fell in love with my Fluke.

When I turned forty, two of my friends/bandmates gave me a ukulele as I moved further into solo performing as a children's singer/songwriter/educator. Aware of my work in musical theater and cabaret, they knew I would eventually need to accompany myself on an instrument that was both portable and relatively easy to learn. (The guitar they'd given me in my twenties lay unused in the closet, except for rehearsals when one of them needed it!)

They gifted me with a lovely little ukulele that would not stay tuned. I began to resent how often I had to tune my GCEA strings before and (horrors!) during a 30-minute performance or preschool music class. I would default to my autoharp (also given to me by a friend) that, once tuned, could be gently played for several hours without retuning. (Of course, tuning a 36-string autoharp takes at least ten minutes and tons of patience, especially when it's a 1970s-era instrument.)

Sometime in my mid forties, I came upon the Fluke. It might have been at A Different Strummer (https://www.oldtownschool.org/musicstore/), the onsite store of Chicago's venerable Old Town School of Folk Music. On one wall of the store hung several Flukes in purple, orange, or red, and one decorated with large Hawaiian flowers! Child-friendly ukes, to be sure, but how did they sound?

Great. Really great. And because of the materials and design, they stay in tune far longer.

How much were they?

Expensive. Way more than a typical $40 ukulele. Five times as much, in fact.

But the Flukes were so pretty. The salesperson encouraged me to try one and it had a gorgeous sound. Afterward, I went home to do some research. Turns out Flukes were brand new, so there wasn't much online. I asked around and no one I knew had one. I called my friend Jim Craig at Hog Eye Music (http://www.hogeyemusic.com/hogeyemusic.com/Welcome.html) just outside of Chicago. Jim had long been my autoharp doctor, one of few in the area who could re-glue a felt chord bar or install a new tuning peg. He said he indeed had one Fluke and, as far as he could tell, it was a fine instrument. Jim's a folk singer who's been around since the sixties. I knew he wouldn't lead me astray.

(photo by Dan Rest)

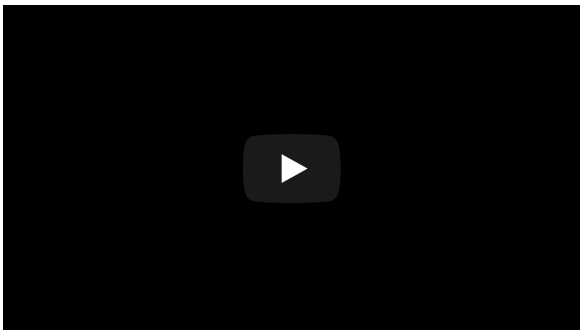
At Hog Eye Music I held a burnt-orange Fluke in my hands. Jim said he'd give me his musician's discount, which brought the price down to under $200. All Flukes at that time came with a gig bag IN A MATCHING COLOR. Sold!

Preschoolers always ask me about the "boo-boo" just under the strings. I never thought much of it, but I did ask Jim Craig about fixing it. He said, "Why would you do that? It shows you use it. It proves that you are a real musician. Did you ever see a picture of Woody Guthrie's guitar? Pete Seeger's banjo?" Enough said. The boo-boo stays.

I use my Fluke in concert. I record with it. I bought it a hard-shell travel case (that I don't think is sold anymore—sorry). I bring it to all of my preschool music classes and teacher workshops, and on every vacation to use for composing. "Every Little Bit of You" and "The Boo Boo Gets Better By and By" were both written using my Fluke, though it is sometimes hard to hear the uke tracks on my recordings. If you want to hear me play, check out "First You Take a Seed (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PzsrKf4FDSU)" from my CD *Come and Make a Circle* or "When It's Cold Outside (https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PLtYpl21eEBNA5ydR3LllEBJy3LPpiOqhc&v=X43dJjKzdQU&app=desktop)" from *Come and Make a Circle 3.*

First You Take a Seed

My Fluke is a goodwill ambassador, too. I've shared her with many a teacher and parent after a concert. It seems everyone wants to hold her, and in my experience, EVERYONE can play a C chord on her. This is what makes the ukulele a perfect instrument for someone tiptoeing into self-accompaniment. You can learn three chords and play dozens of children's songs. I'm not being self-deprecating when I say that I play seven chords really well and that's all I've ever needed.



Since I first picked up the Fluke, it has become immensely popular, and ukulele playing in general has enjoyed a resurgence in popularity over the last decade. I love seeing more and more CMNers strumming their ukes at the conference each year.

I love my Fluke.

I even named it. Hayley the Ukulele. I wrote a song about her and it goes like this:

I love my ukulele
My orange ukulele

Her name is Hayley
I play her daily
I love my ukulele
I play her every _____ *
Her name is _____ *
I love I love I love my ukulele.

** I leave this out with kids and let them fill it in*

I will sing it for you next time we meet.

(photo by Sophie Yanny-Tillar)

Ten Things I Love About You, Kulele

by Amy Conley

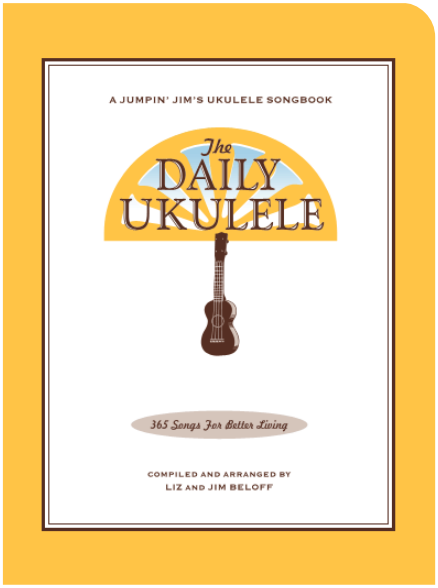
1. JAZZ! As a longtime guitar player, I always wanted to play jazz chords (did you know they are hard with six strings?). But when I discovered the ukulele, I realized all those chords are no more difficult than other chords, since there are only four strings. Playing jazz opens up a whole new experience for students, audiences, or choruses, and a whole new genre of music to explore. It also is a huge boon to my songwriting repertoire of chords!

2. WEIGHT! Wow, a ukulele in a gig bag on my back feels like a feather! Okay. I exaggerated. Maybe ten feathers.

3. BANJO UKULELES ARE FUN! They go perfectly with kazoos and give that funky little happy sound, even happier than a banjo OR a ukulele (if you can imagine that). Check out the Firefly (https://www.magicfluke.com/Magic-Fluke-Firefly-Banjo-Ukulele-s/1514.htm) made in Massachusetts by the Magic Fluke Company (http://www.magicfluke.com/About-Magic-Fluke-s/1814.htm).

4. TEACHING! I am SO much happier teaching ukulele than I was teaching guitar. Not only do people stick with it longer because it is easier, but teaching a group of people who are singing while playing ukulele sounds much better than lots of loud guitars!

5. THE DAILY UKULELE (http://www.dailyukulele.com/dailyukulele365/index.html) and *The Daily Ukulele Leap Year Edition* (http://www.dailyukulele.com/dailyukulele366/index.html), both compiled and arranged by Liz and Jim Beloff. With 365 and 366 songs, respectively, in many genres, they are the perfect books for students of all levels. They are also wonderful collections for performers. These books revolutionized my life when I found them five years ago and added ukulele classes to my music business. Using these songbooks saves me tons of time! Spoiler alert: most songs go back thirty or more years. That's why I love them!


A JUMPIN' JIM'S UKULELE SONGBOOK
The DAILY UKULELE
365 Songs for Better Living
COMPILED AND ARRANGED BY
LIZ AND JIM BELOFF

6. COMMUNITY Playing the ukulele creates opportunities to sing, play, and learn with many other people, and to connect with others all around the globe through camps, festivals, and social media.

7. ENERGY The energy needed to work with children is considerable, as you know. My work with adults is still energetic, but uses a different kind of energy where I can sit in a chair once in a while and not worry about my students eating stuff off the floor, running into each other, or climbing on the furniture. I can even go out of the room sometimes when needed. Now my week consists of classes and events that run on sustainable energy—mine!

8. VARIETY Playing ukulele adds a lot of variety to my performance. After a few songs on guitar or banjo, the ukulele makes a nice change. It also can give my tired arms a break. And, like I mentioned, adding jazz songs with a ukulele is a lot of fun.

9. ADULTS The uke has inspired me to learn jazz songs from the 1920s and 1930s, teach more adult classes, learn more adult songs, create a more attractive set list for senior concerts, and lead ukulele workshops. Adults are very different from children to teach, and I enjoy that challenge as well.

10. LESS IS MORE Four simple strings, played one at a time, sound quite beautiful and can give you all kinds of musical ideas if you listen for them. Many chords are played with only one or two fingers upon the fret board, leaving your other hand to brush across the strings or pluck them one at a time. The world is your oyster! The ukulele is your pearl!

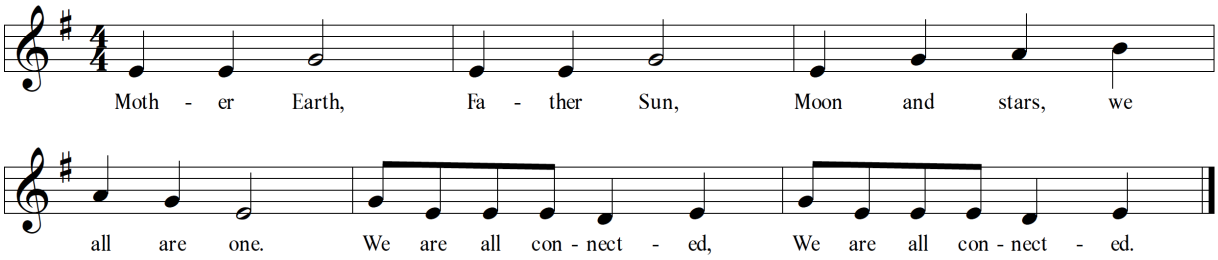
Final Thoughts: If you play guitar, get a uke. You won't regret it. If you don't play guitar, get a uke. You won't regret it either. If you want people to learn with, search for a ukulele club near you or start one on a site like Meetup.com (https://www.meetup.com) or at your library or local music store. Then let the wild rumpus start!

We Are All Connected

Words and music by Sue Straw
© 2014 Sue Straw Music

00:00 03:21

"We Are All Connected" is featured on Sue Straw's album *Native American Songs and Stories Vol 1*,which received the "Best Spoken Word/Folk Recording Award" from the Native American Music Association in 2016. Sue writes, "A few years ago, Monty Harper, another Oklahoma children's musician/songwriter, did a call out to CMN for anyone who wanted to donate or write a song for an Earth Day presentation he was going to do for some adults. I wanted to contribute something, and so, using inspiration from my Native American ancestors, I wrote 'We Are All Connected.' Native American music consists of singing, percussion, and rattles, and thus there are no chords. I put it in the key of E minor so that children could play it easily on their recorders."



Mother Earth, Father Sun,
Moon and stars, we all are one.
We are all connected,
We are all connected.

Rocks and plains, hills and trees,
Mountains, forests, oceans, seas,
We are all connected,
We are all connected.

Deer and fish, dog and flea,
Bird and butterfly and bee,
We are all connected,
We are all connected.

Boys and girls, old and young,
All Earth's creatures live as one.
We are all connected,
We are all connected.

Sue traces her heritage on her mother's side to the Cherokee Nation West:

"There are seven Clans of the Cherokee. Women, or Clan Mothers, were in charge of the Clans. On the Cherokee Nation West roll, we found our ancestors in the Red Paint Clan. I had an Arkansas flute-maker/friend make me a special Red Paint Clan Flute, which I designed."

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A Beaver

Words and music by Jean Young
© 2006 Jean Young

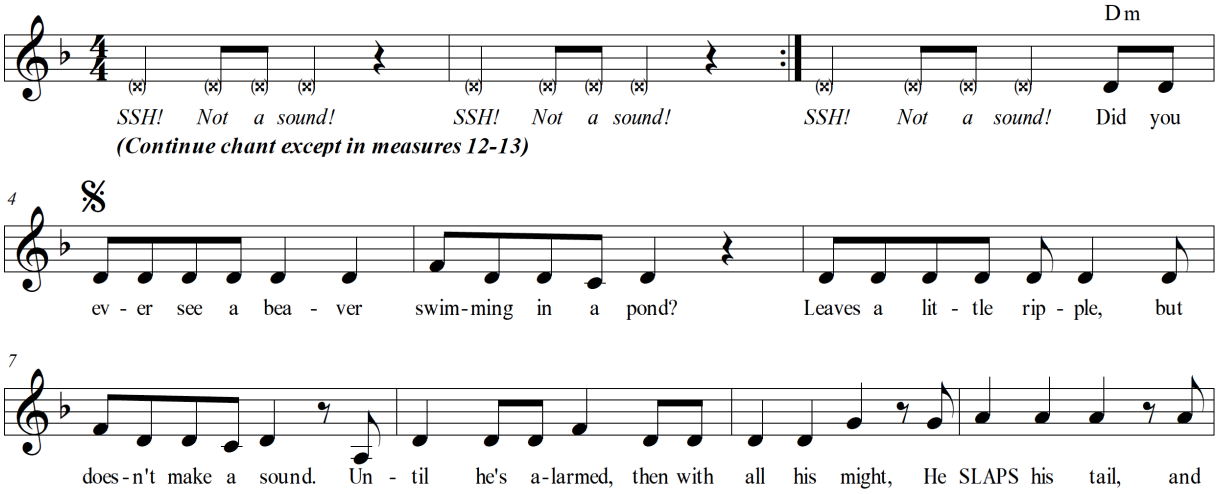
00:00 02:32

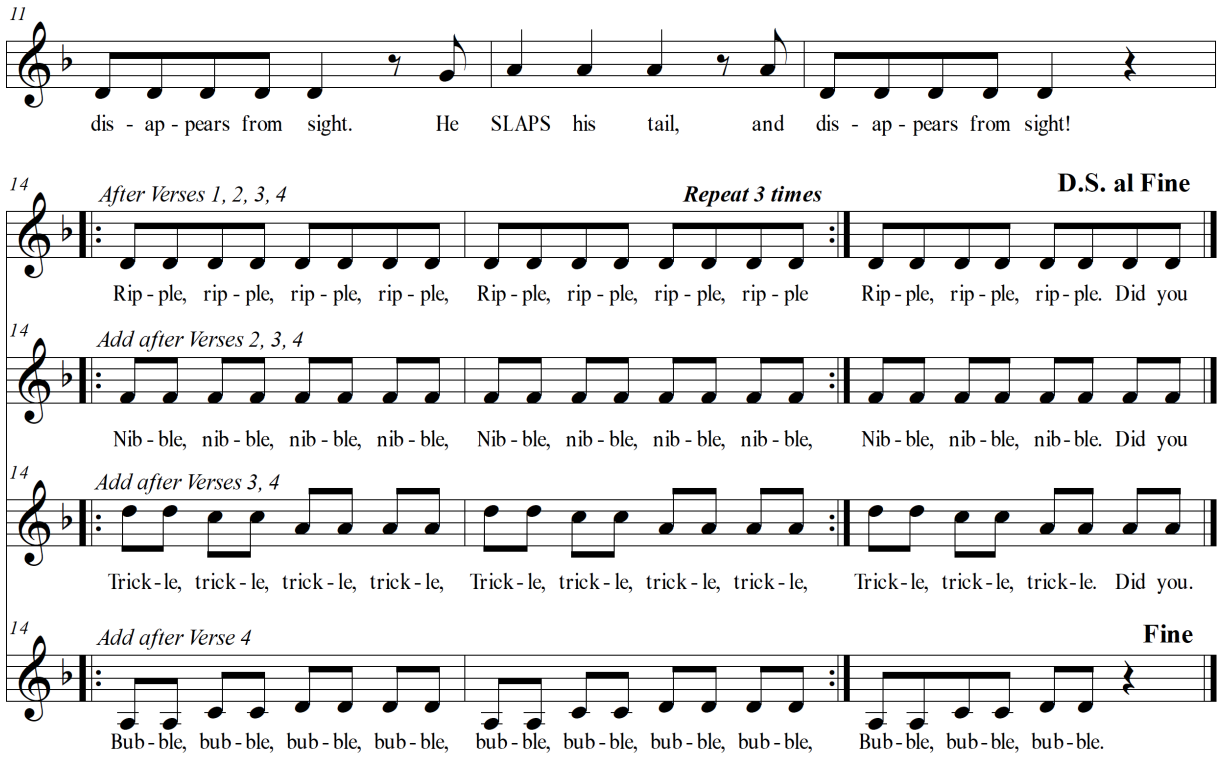
Jean says, "I always introduce the song with a true story about going camping with my husband and two young children. My husband, who likes to get up early and take a walk while I sleep a bit longer, returned one morning with the story of seeing a beaver on the nearby pond. He challenged me to get up early enough the next day to see the beaver at work. So I did…crawling out of the tent very quietly.

"I then start right into the 'SSH! Not a sound' chant, which the children can join in on and continue throughout the first verse. With a small beaver puppet, I sing the first verse, then show a photo of a beaver swimming, leaving a V-shaped wake. I might teach the second verse as well, showing another photo of the tree trunks and starting with the chant, 'Tooth marks! Hey, look!'

"I would wait until another day to teach the last two verses, again showing photos of beaver dams and houses.

"With five or six year olds, after they learn the song, I like to try having half of them continue the chant while half the class sings the verse with me. We'll switch jobs for the second verse, with the other half doing the chant."


Dm
SSH! Not a sound! SSH! Not a sound! SSH! Not a sound! Did you
(Continue chant except in measures 12-13)
4
ev - er see a bea - ver swim-ming in a pond? Leaves a lit - tle rip - ple, but
7
does-n't make a sound. Un - til he's a-larmed, then with all his might, He SLAPS his tail, and


11
dis - ap - pears from sight. He SLAPS his tail, and dis - ap - pears from sight!
14
After Verses 1, 2, 3, 4
Repeat 3 times
D.S. al Fine
Rip - ple, rip - ple, rip - ple, rip - ple, Rip - ple, rip - ple, rip - ple, rip - ple Rip - ple, rip - ple, rip - ple. Did you
14
Add after Verses 2, 3, 4
Nib - ble, nib - ble, nib - ble, nib - ble, Nib - ble, nib - ble, nib - ble, nib - ble, Nib - ble, nib - ble, nib - ble. Did you
14
Add after Verses 3, 4
Trick - le, trick - le, trick - le, trick - le, Trick - le, trick - le, trick - le, trick - le, Trick - le, trick - le, trick - le. Did you.
14
Add after Verse 4
Fine
Bub - ble, bub - ble, bub - ble, bub - ble, bub - ble, bub - ble, bub - ble, bub - ble, Bub - ble, bub - ble, bub - ble.

(Chant) SSH! Not a sound!
Did you ever see a beaver swimming in a pond?
Leaves a little ripple but doesn't makes a sound
Until he's alarmed, then with all his might,
He SLAPS his tail, and disappears from sight!
He SLAPS his tail, and disappears from sight!

Ripple, ripple, ripple, ripple,
Ripple ripple, ripple, ripple.

(Chant) Tooth marks! Hey look!
Did you ever see a beaver chewing down a tree?
With great big teeth, not like you and me!
He nibbles and he nibbles and he nibbles and then,
WHAM goes the tree for building a dam!
WHAM goes the tree for building a dam!

Nibble, nibble, nibble, nibble,
Nibble, nibble, nibble, nibble.

(Chant) Sticks and logs, lots of sticks and logs!
Did you ever see a beaver build a beaver pond?
With sticks and logs, not a magic wand!
He piles them higher, and higher until
The water CAN'T GET OUT, except a little spill!
It CAN'T GET OUT, except a little spill!

Trickle, trickle, trickle, trickle,
Trickle, trickle, trickle, trickle.

(Chant) Hmmm? Where's the door?
Did you ever see a beaver build a house of sticks?
Sitting on the water, it has a special trick!
Look all around, you can't see the door!

The beaver dives down DEEP and comes up through the floor!
He dives down DEEP and comes up through the floor.

Bubble, bubble, bubble, bubble,
Bubble, bubble, bubble, bubble.

Repeat verse 1

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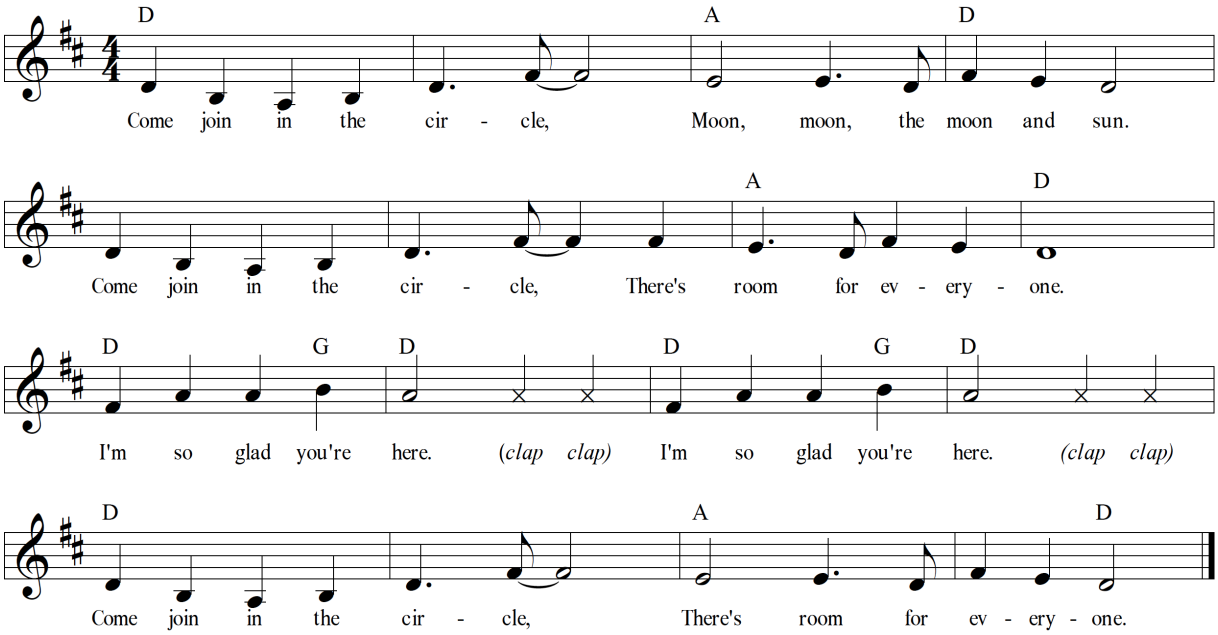
Come Join in the Circle

Words and music by Sarah Pirtle
© 1997 Discovery Center Music, BMI

00:00 01:51

"Come Join in the Circle" not only gathers a group, but helps children look at each other and feel concretely welcomed. It's singable and a perfect vehicle for movement extensions. The song can be found in Sarah's book *Linking Up: Using Music, Movement, and Language Arts to Promote Caring, Cooperation, and Communication*, a treasure trove of songs, activities, and teaching tips designed to help teachers develop conflict resolution skills and respect for diversity in their students.


D A D
Come join in the cir - cle, Moon, moon, the moon and sun.
A D
Come join in the cir - cle, There's room for ev - ery - one.
D G D D G D
I'm so glad you're here. (clap clap) I'm so glad you're here. (clap clap)
D A D
Come join in the cir - cle, There's room for ev - ery - one.

Come join in the circle,
Moon, moon, the moon and sun.
Come join in the circle,
There's room for everyone.

I'm so glad you're here. (*clap clap*)
I'm so glad you're here. (*clap clap*)
Come join in the circle,
There's room for everyone.

Wave around the circle,
Moon, moon, the moon and sun.
Wave around the circle,
Wave to everyone.

Wave the way you like. (*clap clap*)
Wave the way you like. (*clap clap*)
Wave around the circle,
Wave to everyone.

Sarah Pirtle is a founder of CMN and the 2007 Magic Penny Award recipient. In addition to the many songs she's contributed to *PIO!*, her article "Building CMN" (Issue #81) is a fascinating and important

account of CMN's history.

She continues to build upon this legacy through her web page Hope Sings—a collection of sixty songs of inspiration to be downloaded, listened to, sung, and shared. These songs of hope are designed to underline how we are interconnected by events, whether joyous or difficult.

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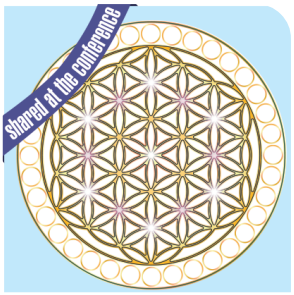
On and On

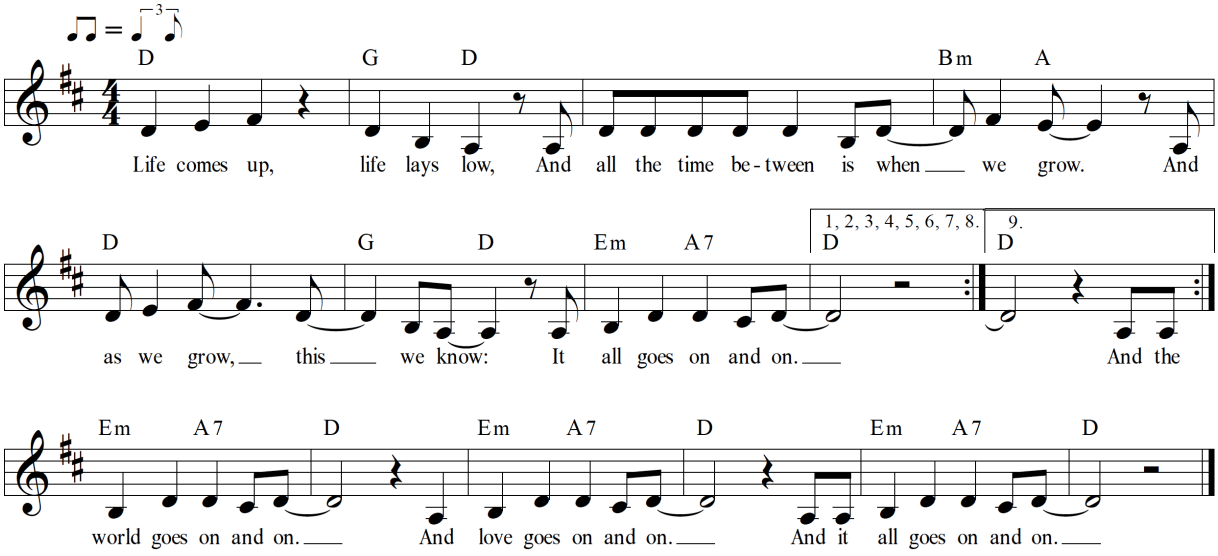


Words and music by Kari Thomas Kovick
© 2007 Kari Thomas Kovick

00:00 03:18

Kari wrote this song when she was creating a fundraising CD for two little boys in her community who were diagnosed with brain cancer. Children from her community classes learned and recorded songs with her to support the families of these two boys. In the middle of the project, one of the boys died. He was only three and a half years old. Kari was devastated and didn't know how to talk to her students about it. "On and On" came to her as a gift at a time when she least expected her creativity to appear.

It is hard to find songs about death that are simple enough to share with children. Kari hopes that this one can be helpful. The American Sign Language for the words "life," "death," "forever," and "always" are very beautiful and fit the song perfectly. As in the verses below, the song can be adapted for various age groups and situations. Kari also uses this song in a school garden education program as part of a lesson on the life cycle.


D G D Bm A
Life comes up, life lays low, And all the time be-tween is when we grow. And
D G D Em A7 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. D 9. D
as we grow, this we know: It all goes on and on. And the
Em A7 D Em A7 D Em A7 D
world goes on and on. And love goes on and on. And it all goes on and on.

Life comes up, life lays low,
And all the time between is when we grow.
And as we grow, this we know:
It all goes on and on.

Grass comes up, grass lays low,
And all the time between is when it grows.
And as it grows, this we know:
It all goes on and on.

Trees come up, trees lay low,
And all the time between is when they grow.
And as they grow, this we know:
It all goes on and on.

Well, bird eggs hatch, and old birds die,
And all the time between is when they fly.
And as they fly, this they know:
It all goes on and on.

A bunny's life starts, and a bunny's life stops,
And all the time between is when they hop.
And as they hop, this they know:
It all goes on and on.

Mosquito eggs hatch, mosquitoes get squished,
And all the time between is when we itch.
And as we itch, this we know:
It all goes on and on.

Doggies come up, doggies lay low,
And all the time between is when they grow.
And as they grow, this we know:
It all goes on and on!

Some lives are short, some lives are long,
But all the time we live, we sing our song.
And as we sing, this we know:
It all goes on and on.

Well, everything's born, and all things die,
And sometimes when they do, we cry and cry.
But as we cry, this we know:
It all goes on and on.
And the world goes on and on.
And love goes on and on.
And it all goes on and on.

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Patas en al Aire (Paws in the Air)

Words and music by Ben Gundersheimer
© 2017 Coil Records (ASCAP)

00:00 03:10

Latin Grammy Award–winner Ben Gundersheimer contributed this song from his CD, *Mundo Verde/Green World*, a collection of original, bilingual songs with an environmental theme. "Nature has always been a major source of inspiration for me as a songwriter, and I'm fortunate to live on a dead-end road in the woods of Western Massachusetts. From the window of my recording studio, I can see black bears, coyotes, foxes, and my dog Josie who keeps a close eye on all the animals of the forest. For the song 'Patas en el Aire,' I imagined a scenario where all the animals of the forest came together thanks to the universal power of music. The song has quickly become a favorite at our live concerts as it's a bit of bilingual 'Simon Says.' The kids love acting out the verses."

Reggae
Chorus
F♯m Bm A E
Pa-tas en el ai - re, Pa-tas en el ai - re, Sal-
F♯m Bm A 1. E Verse 1 Fine
tan-do en el bos - que, Con tus pa-tas en el ai - re. I
F♯m Bm A E
live in the for-est with the black bears. We share the same wa-ter, we share the same air with the
F♯m Bm A E
deer and the rab-bit, the fox and the birds. It's a beau-ti-ful life, it'a a beau-ti-ful world.
2. E Verse 2 F♯m Bm A E
Put your paws in the air, put your paws on the ground. Jump up touch the sky, now turn a-round. Put your

F♯m Bm A E
paws in the air; put your paws on the ground; Shout out loud, make a joy - ful sound.
3. E Bridge D A
Vi - vo en el bos - que con los o - sos ne - gros.
D A
El - los son mis a - mi - gos, el - los son mis ma - e - stros.
E F♯
Me en - se-ñan a vi-vir en ar-mo - ní-a con la lu - na, en ar-no-
D E 4.
ní - a con el sol, y con la na - tur - a - le - za.
Verse 3 F♯m Bm A E
Pa-tas en el ai-re, pa-tas en el sue-lo, Con to-dos tus a-mi-gos y las ma-nos ha-c'el sue-lo.
F♯m Bm A E D.C. al Fine
Pa-tas en la no-che, pa-tas en el dí-a, Pa-tas de a-mor, pa-tas de a-le-grí-a!

Chorus:
Patas en el aire.
Patas en el aire.
Saltando en el bosque,
Con tus patas en el aire.

Verse:
I live in the forest with the black bears.
We share the same water, we share the same air
With the deer and the rabbit, the fox and the birds.
It's a beautiful life, it's a beautiful world.

Chorus

Put your paws in the air, put your paws on the ground.
Jump up touch the sky, now turn around.
Put your paws in the air, put your paws on the ground.
Shout out loud, make a joyful sound.

Chorus

Bridge:
Vivo en el bosque con los osos negros.

Ellos son mis amigos, ellos son mis maestros.
Me enseñan a vivir en armonía con la luna,
En armonía con el sol, y con la naturaleza.

Chorus

Patas en el aire, patas en el suelo,
Con todos tus amigos y las manos hacia el suelo.
Patas en la noche, patas en el día,
Patas de amor, patas de alegría.

Chorus 2X

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We Sing for Peace

Words and music by Bill Harley
© 2017 Round River Music (BMI)

00:00 04:12

Bill tells us, "I wrote this song for a performance I did in Hiroshima in 2014. The organizers wanted me to perform my songs with a group of school children and asked if I would write a song about peace for them. I wrote this song with a children's chorus in mind, trying to keep the melody and words simple and true. In fact, I'm almost embarrassed at their simplicity, and sometimes feel vulnerable when I sing it, since I'm saying something I truly believe, which I often avoid. At the performance at the Peace Park in Hiroshima, the children's voices and enthusiasm reminded me that passing on my doubt or cynicism isn't worthy of me.

"The third verse, 'From where we stand…,' was written knowing I would be singing it in Hiroshima—a worthwhile pilgrimage for all humans."

Samba ♩ = 180
Verse
D A7 D A7 D A7 D
Look - ing down on Earth from up in space,
A7 D A7 D A7 D A7 D
They say it's real - ly not that big a place.
Am7 D7 G G♯° F♯m7 B7 Em7
Chorus
We share the same rain, We share the same sky, We share the same pledge,
A7 D Am7 D7 G G♯°
Our work will ne - ver cease. We share the same world, We share the
F♯m7 B7 Em7 A7 D A7
same dream, We share the same song, We sing for peace.

Looking down on Earth from up in space,
They say it's really not that big a place.

Chorus:
We share the same rain
We share the same sky
We share the same pledge
Our work will never cease.
We share the same world
We share the same dream
We share the same song
We sing for peace.

All rivers run from mountains to the sea.
The breezes blow the same for you and me.

Chorus

From where we stand we know the cost of hate.
From where we stand we know it's not too late.

Chorus

One by one our numbers they will grow.
Voice by voice we speak the truth we know.

"This song is written as a samba, which means the notes are often anticipated. I sing the verse in straight quarter notes, but syncopate the chorus, as samba singers would. And while I use a plain D in the chord symbols, a D6 (actually an easier chord—two fingers!) would sound truer, or even better a D6/9. And while you can use simple triads for the minor chords (F#m, Em), the minor seventh sounds much sweeter.

"The song, though, can be performed using only three chords, D, G, and A7. The chord pattern would be:

Verse
D / A7 / D / A7 / D / A7 / D / A7 /
D / A7 / D / A7 / D / A7 / D / D7

Chorus
G / G / D / D / A7 / A7 / D / D7
G / G / D / D / A / A / D

"I haven't recorded this yet, but hope to soon, with a samba band and full chorus."

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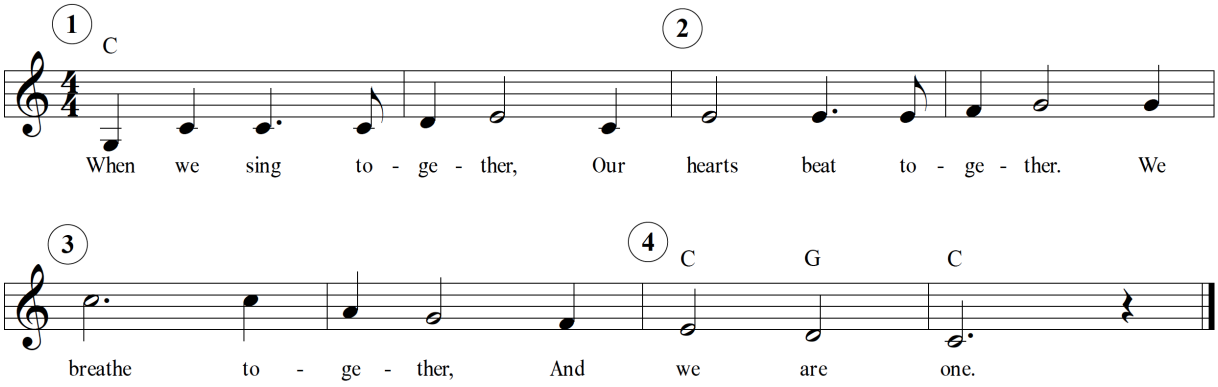
When We Sing Together

Words and music by Kim Wallach
© 2017 Kim Wallach

00:00 01:05

Kim says, "This song is based upon all the articles about the benefits of singing together. Originally, I wrote it as a much longer song with three verses and a chorus, but it turned out I could say what I wanted to say, and get the people singing the song better, by structuring it as a round."

One of Kim's professional goals this year was to improve her students' round and part singing. She uses hand motions to help students remember the words, for example, thumping on the chest when singing "our hearts beat together." After only two rehearsals, her students made the recording included here!



When we sing together,
Our hearts beat together.
We breathe together,
And we are one.

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Let's Talk Tech

In Search of the Wild Ukulele

by Alina Celeste

While I am often peppered with questions about YouTube as a revenue source or avenue for exposure, I am frequently surprised by how few people appreciate it for what it really is: the best resource for self-driven learning EVER.

It's true! Type any subject into YouTube's search bar and you will find myriad reviews, tutorials, histories, and homages. YouTube has made learning more accessible and more possible for everyone with Internet access—a number that grows every day. In only the past six months, I myself have learned how to clean stains off my refrigerator door (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bgmJN-scAsI) (long story), how to tie a tie (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9BMhFmNzw-o), what Mi'kmaq (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A3JSfx3wiC0) sounds like, and of course, how to play a song I couldn't get out of my head (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wIUAG_xF6lE).

Speaking of songs, YouTube is one of my first stops when looking for music and folk songs. I love member Dany Rosevear (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UClVzJjSNnUetB-bpHzPKcyQ)'s channel, as well as the Smithsonian Folkways (https://www.youtube.com/user/SmithsonianFolkways) channel. But even more importantly, YouTube is also great for music lessons! A lot of my own ukulele learning has been done with YouTube, and there are several channels devoted to it.

Ukulele is an especially good instrument to learn via YouTube, because the instrument itself is small enough that no special angles are needed when filming, and simple enough that you can easily see what the performer is doing with their hands. The best videos are made by artists who truly enjoy what they are doing and have a charming on-screen presence.

There are videos for players at every level. Beginners can find basic things like how to hold the ukulele (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BKZK8vjDx2Q) and first ukulele song (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A0mJxQbXWAc&list=PLODvOB1QB53X-8-nsakUkBKsrsREtPvq0), and more advanced skills like chucking (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MBBmUVqM6Vw) or blues and lick fills (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HksSu2G01W8). I've collected seven channels devoted to ukulele that I particularly enjoy. They are shared below with descriptions of what you can find on each channel and links to some of my favorite episodes.

Bernadette Teaches Music (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHF88ovEEPETzNtEUbgGBuw) is a wonderful, quirky little channel aimed at beginners. Ms. B is a music teacher in Okinawa, Japan, and she shares her love of the instrument on a frequent and regular basis. One of the things I really enjoy about her channel is that she also devotes time to things like making your own straps (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NQmnV8KpDlc) and a Ukulele Buying Guide. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UG_Iu5QjcoE) Her videos are simple and well produced, and she often has really fun hair. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bzWz1TiZDwY)

(https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHF88ovEEPETzNtEUbgGBuw)
Bernadette Teaches Music

Cynthia Lin Music (https://www.youtube.com/user/cynthialinmusic) is hosted by San Francisco–based jazz musician Cynthia Lin. Her channel has more performative videos, with some lovely covers as well as original tunes and even music videos. She has a playlist (https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLODvOB1QB53XF7wKXG6pilnWA8c4raRrh) with numbered lessons and always provides songs with which to practice new skills and chords. She provides free downloadable PDF chord charts of her tutorials to help you practice until you're comfortable enough to sing along with her. She also has a lovely singing voice and her videos are aimed at those who wish to sing as well.

(https://www.youtube.com/user/cynthialinmusic)
Cynthia Lin Music

The Ukulele Teacher (https://www.youtube.com/user/TheUkuleleTeacher), based in Los Angeles, is an exhaustive channel created by John Atkins. It's full of popular songs, classics, and even some vlog-style videos. For absolute beginners, there is a video devoted to how to sing and strum at the same time (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jJm-YykGED8). Atkins has a very spontaneous approach, so his tutorials feel casual, like you're hanging out with a friend who can really play.

One Music School (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXGiCLn-Xh9VwDT8h06rOIA) offers ukulele tutorials of the newest pop songs on the radio and tips and tricks on how to play, as well as a playlist with practical and basic advice on caring for your instrument. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5lUTfEnTl9Y) Katie Denure, the teacher behind the videos, has a more formal approach to her lessons, so if a tighter structure appeals to you, she's a great one to start with. In addition to a lovely voice, she has a clear and concise way of explaining chords and tablatures, or "tabs," which can be tricky for those just starting.

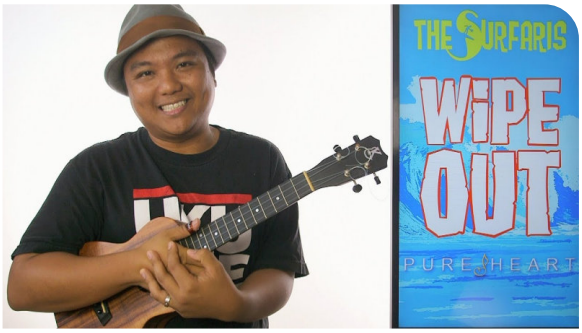
Uke Like the Pros (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCr2uVr0DT_2CuCvMuL2lWXg/) is a straight-up educational channel by veteran teacher Terry Carter. Videos display chords in real time, and in the longer and more advanced tutorials, Carter demonstrates licks (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YzqcEXiQ6Yk)and finger patterns as well as tabs, which show you exactly where to play notes on the fretboard of the ukulele. He focuses on classic rock and pop songs, but also spends time on music

(https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCr2uVr0DT_2CuC

theory and skills like sight-reading.

vMuL2lWXg/)
Uke Like the Pros

Connor Berry (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCx7Zm9QA6bx_UFAislYOK_A) also provides chords and tabs that simultaneously appear under the video of his actual playing. This channel is solely for instrumental work and for the more advanced player. Connor doesn't sing and he doesn't waste much time with filler. If you just want to sit and stare at somebody's fingers (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U3JJOX-XOf4) until you've mastered it, Connor is your guy.



(https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDglnz22aXMzpug5HbD1bCA)
Ukelele Underground

Ukulele Underground (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDglnz22aXMzpug5HbD1bCA)'s channel is also designed for the intermediate or more advanced player, with many play alongs and short videos on techniques and tricks. The UU website (https://ukuleleunderground.com/about/) was created a decade ago by three musicians "with the purpose of helping to grow the next generation of ukulele players throughout the world." Their pop song tutorials are not watered down, so you'll need a strong grasp on chords and chord switching. Their popular Friday Jam (https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLrzw25MQ0Nr2VIzce02ZLIRN6D51IcZmQ) series focuses on classic and retro songs like "Fly Me to the Moon (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8zvLvfUzCQ)" and Hawaiian songs like "Ehu Girl (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P0xzFcUoLYw)." Many different musicians are featured in their videos, so the channel is not dependent on just one personality.

Each of these channels offers something unique and original. The different styles and perspectives make it easy to find the system or personality that works best for you. Most of them take, and even ask, for requests, and all are enthusiastic musicians and educators. This is by no means an exhaustive list—that would easily take up this entire issue! But it's a good place to start, and will certainly provide countless hours of entertainment and education for those bitten by the dancing flea, the ukulele.

Music In Bloom

We Are All Connected

by Maureen Conlin

To be connected means to be joined, attached, or linked. Through song and musical activities we join together to become one voice, linked through music and attached by the connection of sound.

During music class I asked my young students what it means to be connected, and their response was "to plug something in." I love this answer, because when we connect with someone or something, there is wonderful electricity that happens as we all "plug in" together. Music is a wonderful connection that we can all share, no matter who we are or where we live. It truly is a universal language. Music is a thread that is woven from child to child, teacher to child, parent to child, friend to friend, and on and on. When children sing together they connect and become one voice. When they play instruments together, they connect through sound. As parents and teachers it is important for us to foster that connection.

Provide the children with drums and invite them to explore the different sounds they can make. Then have them count and play a steady beat, all joined together to create one sound from many drums. Play softly, loudly, then fast and slow while continuing to count the beat from one to ten, with the goal of having them all play in unison.

Give the children opportunities to explore their own voices individually by using speech-amplifying "telephones." I use a 3-inch piece of PVC pipe with a connecting PVC elbow that fits on each end. Children can whisper softly into one of the elbow piece while holding the other end to their ear. Ask them to say, then sing, their own name, so they are able to hear how their voice sounds. After they have had the opportunity to hear their own voice, ask the children to sing together. Sit in a circle and, as a group, sing or chant the names of the other children in the circle. Use a cell phone to record their voices so the children can listen to the playback and hear how they sound when they all sing in unison.

Let the children feel another kind of connection by playing a foot game to music. Children find a

partner and put their feet together, then pretend to ride a bicycle to Leroy Anderson's "Syncopated Clock" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CrpdQngwk2g) as they push forward and back with the other child. When the music shifts and changes, ask the children to join hands and slowly continue in a circular motion to the flow of the music.

Music is a perfect way to help children connect with others in the community. Plan a field trip to the local senior center so that the children can share their songs with the older residents in the community. Have them spend time making cards with the seniors that reflect the themes of the songs the children sing. Choose a song that the adults might enjoy singing with the children, such as "You Are My Sunshine" or "If You're Happy and You Know It," and watch how young and old connect and join together through music and song.

Share with the children how individual notes can be connected to create a melody, become a chord, or create rhythmic patterns. Extend the exploration using hand bells or a xylophone for melody, drums or wood blocks for rhythmic patterns, or voices to create a melody.

Ask the children again what they think it means to be connected and turn their ideas into a simple song. These amazing little minds can come up with some very creative ideas!

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We Are All Connected

We Are All Connected

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C F C
We are all connected, one big family

C F G7
We are all connected, friends like you and me

C F C
We are all connected, from the moment of our birth

C G7 C
Each and every one of us, sharing life on earth

G7 C G7 C
We share a world together, each and every one

G7 C G7 C
Living under twinkling stars, the moon and the sun

C F C
We are all connected, one big family

C F G7
We are all connected, friends like you and me

C F C
We are all connected, from the moment of our birth

C G7 C
Each and every one of us, sharing life on earth

G7 C G7 C
Kindness helps connect us, so share a smile or two

G7 C G7 C
Music weaves a thread that goes from me to you

C F C
We are all connected, one big family

C F G7 C
We are all connected, friends like you and me

Ask the children to add additional verses to share with one another and watch how music blooms with the little ones on their musical journey.

Pro Song

Passionate People Inspire Extraordinary Songs, Part II

by Monty Harper

Welcome to the second half of this two-part column on nonfiction songwriting. In Part I we discussed how to interview passionate people for inspiration. In Part II we'll pretend we've done an interview and explore a couple of techniques essential for turning all that great material into an extraordinary song.

Our first challenge in this nonfiction songwriting effort will be to identify a song-sized approach to sharing an interview-sized wealth of information. We start off like a sculptor, staring at a big block of marble. There's a song in there somewhere, but how do we visualize it and draw it out?

Enter my favorite pair of songwriting tools, focus and angle.

While a song's topic is what it's really about, its *focus* is the one thing it's most literally about, the one thing the lyric most often focuses on. A song's focus may also be its topic, but not always: in the Beatles' song "Blackbird" the focus is a blackbird; the topic is freedom.

A song's *angle* is the unique lens through which it reveals its focus. A song's angle includes its message, point of view, voice, setting, tone, structure, theme, metaphor, plot, etc.

Our interview has likely provided enough material to write dozens of different songs, each defined by a unique focus and angle. We'll use this idea to generate many options, then we'll choose the focus/angle pair we like best and let it serve as a roadmap for creating our song.

Our song's focus might be any main item from our interview. If the person we've interviewed is exemplary in some way, our focus may be that person, but it doesn't have to be. We could focus on the object of our interviewee's passion, a cool tool they use, a problem they solved, etc. For my song "Citizen Scientist (https://montyharper.bandcamp.com/track/citizen-scientist-single)," I interviewed a botanist about her research using gardens grown by volunteers. The focus of the song is one of those gardens, from the point of view of a volunteer. All the points I make about citizen science (the song's topic) are made using details about that garden (the song's focus).

Suppose we interviewed a microbiologist about her research on a certain bacteria. Combining just these two elements, we can look at six basic focus/angle possibilities:

1. The song is focused on the microbiologist from the bacteria's point of view.
2. The song is focused on the bacteria from the microbiologist's point of view.
3. The microbiologist is singing about herself.
4. The bacteria is singing about itself.
5. A narrator is focused on the biologist. (See my song "Super Scientist (https://montyharper.bandcamp.com/track/super-scientist).")
6. A narrator is focused on the bacteria.

Of course your angle will include a lot more than just point of view, and the focus can be made more or less specific, so each option above can branch into dozens of variations. Here are two possibilities that spring from number 4:

A bacterium is complaining (angle) about having to live in a petri dish (focus).

A bacterium is bragging (angle) about its molecular eye (focus). (See my song "My Molecular Eye (https://montyharper.bandcamp.com/track/my-molecular-eye).")

Once we've identified a few promising focus/angle pairs, we'll want to develop them with one or two detailed sentences each. What is the singer's attitude toward the focus? Will the song be funny, touching, inspirational? What are the song's major themes? Will the song move through time or hone in on a single moment? Will it tell a story?

Let's try this as an exercise right now. Imagine you've interviewed Johnny Appleseed. (Don't worry about getting the facts right, just go by what you think you know.) Give yourself ten minutes to write down as many different focus/angle pairs as you can. Add just enough detail to provide a sense of what that song would be like, then jump to the next idea.

Okay, write!

You're back? Here are some of mine:

1. This song **challenges well-known myths** (angle) about **Johnny Appleseed** (focus). Each verse tackles one piece of misinformation. In the bridge I make the point that the real man may be just as amazing as the myth.
2. **I am the pot** (angle) that Johnny Appleseed wears on his head. I can hear his thoughts, and I can explain his **odd behavior** (focus).
3. I'm **Johnny Appleseed, musing** (angle) about what will become of all my trees in **the future** (focus). Maybe in a few hundred years everyone in the country will enjoy apples from my trees.

Yours are quite different, I'm sure. The possibilities are endless!

It's time to choose a favorite to work with. Our focus and angle will guide us in outlining the song and in determining which details are relevant. We'll include only information that keeps the song focused and helps develop our angle. Everything else is extraneous.

Now that we've roughed out a song from that big block of information, we may face another challenge inherent to writing nonfiction songs: how to handle ungainly words. You're likely facing a few key words—proper nouns, jargon, and other appellations—that are mouthfuls you'd never expect to hear crammed into a song. Examples from my own interview songs include

ecotoxicology, corpus callosum, photosynthesis, basidiospores, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa,* Zodletone Spring, and photocyclic chromophores.

I'm sometimes asked whether such monstrous words belong in a children's song. In my experience, kids love to hear challenging words, as long as I make their meanings clear from context, or use them in a way that's unimportant to the bigger picture.

To illustrate, here's a couplet from my song "Bat Man (https://montyharper.bandcamp.com/track/bat-man)":

> Deep in every cell there are molecular clues
> A record of change that the bat man can use

While the word "molecular" may mean nothing to the listener, the idea of the "bat man" finding some kind of clue he can use (in his quest to solve "the mystery of life's history") is clear.

Difficult words can give a song character and color, educate the listener, and pique their interest. A great word rarely heard in song may even become a hook unto itself.

But what if the word you want to use is awkward and unrhymable?

Often enough this is the case. My approach is to start with my most cantankerous key word and actually build the melody, and sometimes even the entire song structure, around it. Let me take you through it using one of the most challenging words I've ever built a song around: my Oklahoma dinosaur, "Acrocanthosaurus (https://montyharper.bandcamp.com/track/acrocanthosaurus)."

Your most important key word should be prominently positioned in your song, and one of the best places to put it is at the end of the chorus, where it can take the spotlight by completing a rhyme.

So my first question when working with the word Acrocanthosaurus was can I make it rhyme? What are my options? My choices were fairly paltry: bore us, before us, forest, chorus… Maybe the dinosaur came before us or will never bore us?

Here's where my intended focus and angle kept me honest. I'd already decided the song would raise the mystery (angle) of the unusual spines (focus) down this dinosaur's back. None of my available rhymes were key to helping me express these ideas. Though maybe…she'll "never bore us" because she's got these weird spines? Mmm…that seemed like a stretch. I didn't want to suggest boredom as a possible response to a dinosaur. I knew I could do better, so I decided not to put "Acrocanthosaurus" in a rhyming position.

There are plenty of other prominent spots to place a key word, including (but not limited to):

- Last word of a non-rhyming verse
- Repeated several times in the chorus
- First word in a verse

After some trial and error, I matched the word to a melody that put emphasis on the right syllables—ACK-RO-CAN-tho-SORE-us—and allowed it to start my opening line:

> Acrocanthosaurus buried underneath the ground
> One hundred twenty million years you waited to be found.

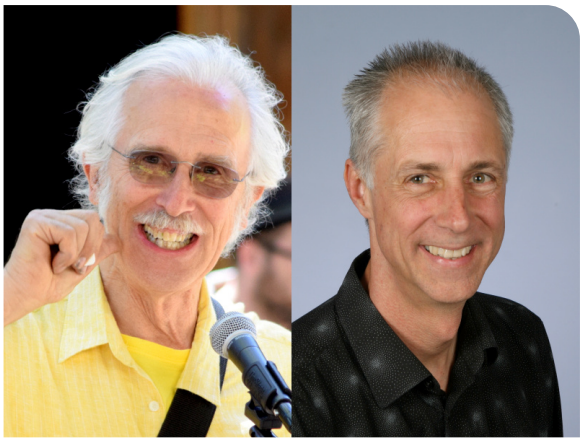
Putting its name at the beginning made it easy to address the dinosaur directly, and I liked that, so I adjusted my angle accordingly:

In this song I'm asking the dinosaur (angle) about the weird spines (focus) down her back.

To continue the pattern, I started each verse by addressing the dinosaur and ended each verse with the refrain "Acrocanthosaurus, my Oklahoma dinosaur." With my title at the beginning and end of each verse, I knew I was looking at an AABA song form. All of which means I allowed my most challenging key word to determine the structure of my lines, my verses, and ultimately my entire song. The result: that crazy six-syllable dinosaur name feels right at home because the song was built up around it.

When faced with a jumble of nonfiction information, find your focus and angle, then build your song around your most challenging key words. May these methods help you write an extraordinary song!

Thoughts To Chew



Framing Our Songs

by Stuart Stotts and Peter Alsop

Stuart Stotts: Many years ago at a CMN gathering (I think it was in California), I went to a workshop that you were leading about performing. The conversation was geared toward how we could use music effectively to address issues important to both kids and adults. While we talked about specifics like audience seating and pacing of material, the thing that stuck with me most was about "framing." Although I had thought about it before, I hadn't heard it put so clearly and simply. Basically, the idea was that as performers we don't need to have a song for every idea or issue we might encounter. What makes a difference is how we set up the song, or the context we put it in. Many songs can serve multiple purposes. Some songs are pretty specific and don't necessarily reach beyond their particular focus. Others can be adapted widely. So rather than having ten different specifically targeted songs for every program or theme, there are many songs that can serve double, triple, or more duty.

Peter Alsop: I'm so glad that you got that and have found it useful! Singing for families provides us with a great opportunity to help kids, families, and even teachers. We can present an idea in our framing story as we introduce our next song that might model for them a way to address something they feel really stuck about, something going on with their family life that's been troubling them.

Right. The idea of framing my songs really helps when I do school and library programs. Often there is a request to tie into a subject or theme, like Black History Month or the environment or bullying. It's been helpful to provide a song or a framing story as the way into conversations about these sometimes loaded subjects. It can help the grownups see how they might bring the subject up, and then I can also model how they might address it with their kids by watching the way I talk to the students at the school.

Exactly! Yaaay! I've been excited recently about the #MeToo (https://metoomvmt.org) movement. It's so great that women are speaking up in such numbers. That old pattern where the first woman who speaks up about a sexual predator or any sexual abuse gets blamed for "wearing provocative clothing" or "having a history of many sexual partners," or is accused of "leading a man on, then changing her mind" after he became "too helpless" to stop his advances. Right? When numbers of women come forward with the same allegations about a man's abusive behaviors, it's so much

harder to attack and blame the survivors. And as a male family singer/songwriter, my work needs to be with the little boys and men. I'd love to put out an album of songs for them that could address these issues in some way, to provide, as you say, a way into some conversations with boys and families that might help enlarge that child's circle of caring to include little girls and women, instead of continuing the pattern that often sets up girls and women as "the other different tribe" that men and boys must "deal with."

Right off hand I can't think of many kid songs that one could do in a school setting to generate discussions about how to raise boys to be sensitive to girls, or train them to be emotionally aware advocates for gender equality. It's hard to do songs that raise awareness about gender or sex issues in an elementary school.

True...but sexual abuse and rape aren't really about sex, they are about the misuse of power. In 1980, I wrote "It's Only a Wee Wee, So What's the Big Deal (http://www.peteralsop.com/video/its-only-wee-wee-so-whats-big-deal)" about a kid's reaction to how grownups seem to focus on gender all the time, and I address some of the power issues that kids have to navigate growing up in our gender-laced socialization processes.

> From **It's Only a Wee-Wee (http://www.peteralsop.com/video/its-only-wee-wee-so-whats-big-deal)**
> *by Peter Alsop (http://www.peteralsop.com)*
> *© 1981 Moose School Music (BMI)*
>
> It's only a wee-wee, so what's the big deal?
> It's only a wee-wee, so what's all the fuss?
> It's only a wee-wee, and everyone's got one,
> There's better things to discuss!
>
> As soon as you're born grown-ups check where you pee
> And then they decide just how you're supposed t'be
> Girls pink and quiet, boys noisy and blue
> Seems like a dumb way to choose what you'll do!

You don't actually play that in schools do you?

I did. Once! The kids loved screaming "wee-wee" during the chorus, but after school, when their parents asked them, "What did you do in school today, dear?" they answered, "We sang about wee-wees!" The principal told me his phone rang off the hook all evening! So I learned that even though "Wee-Wee" seems like a kids' song, it's really for parents, to get them laughing and thinking about how we limit our children's possibilities by focusing on what we think of as gender-specific behaviors.

It's hard to think of any kids songs that address #MeToo issues directly, but with framing there are many other songs that can serve that purpose. One song of many that comes to mind is "Won't You Be My Partner," a zipper song by Bruce O'Brien and his daughter, Emma.

> From **Won't You Be My Partner**
> *by Bruce O'Brien (https://sites.google.com/site/bruceobrienmusic/) & Emma O'Brien*
> *© 1989*
>
> Won't you be my partner to walk in the woods, (3x)
> I am brave and you are brave and I'm brave, too.

In true zipper song fashion, we can zip in almost any activity: go down the slide, touch a worm, sing this song, etc. I've used this song for many years in different ways and it always works with young children. The lyrics can certainly provide a way into a conversation about treating each other fairly and equally, regardless of our age or gender. In this song, both people, or indeed all of us, can be brave. It's not a competition. In fact, we could add that others' bravery can encourage our own bravery. Being brave can be collaborative. These are ideas that challenge traditional ideas of what it means to be a big tough boy or a man.

Yeah, it works great. "This Little Light of Mine" can be used the same way. Our job is to think up a story to frame it. Maybe a little boy starts to "boy-splain" something to a little girl, who feels like she's being spoken down to, so she sings him "This Little Light of Mine" until he gets it, finally sees the error of his little boy ways, and sings along with her! The frame story can model how to gently set a safe boundary with someone we like.

Which is why I like the concept of framing nondirect songs with a direct story to give it a different context. It seems like the easiest way to get these ideas out on the table.

I just thought of a kids' song that's pretty direct! I sang on the backup choruses with my friend Steve Denyes. He works hundreds of dates each year in the schools and libraries of San Diego with his group Hullabaloo. The song is called "I Wear Pink"!

> From **I Wear Pink**
> *by Steve Denyes (http://hullabalooband.com/about/)*
> *© 2016 Steve Denyes*
>
> *Chorus:*
> I play with dolls and I wear pink
> I don't care at all what anybody thinks
>
> I started lovin' pink when I was a kid
> I wanted to play like my big sisters did
> We dressed up in pink, with pink ribbons in our hair
> We had fun and we danced like we didn't have a care
> All my sisters loved me and taught me to be proud
> So when I sing this song, I sing this song loud!

That's a song folks could use right now to open the door for discussions with kids about feelings, and about how boys can learn to treat girls with equality and respect, even before they reach puberty. Beyond simply modeling how to open up ideas that kids and adults might want to talk about, which is certainly important, there are a couple other perspectives that relate to this idea of raising boys and girls to live healthy emotional lives. One is simply the idea of asking for help. "Won't You Be My Partner" does that beautifully. It's hard for many of us men and boys to ask for help, because doing so is a way of expressing vulnerability, and that can be scary. It's also a way to open a connection with someone else, maybe a girl, which many boys and men would like to do, but find difficult.

That's for sure. There are lots of men nowadays trying to figure out what's abusive and what's just "taking the lead."

The main thing is to make sure that when one person or the other says, "Stop" or "I'm scared" or "I don't think I want to do this anymore," then the other person needs to listen and not force their

own agenda on the one who wants to stop. That's about misuse of power. This is a powerful yet simple concept to discuss and reinforce with kids.

And we can teach that to little kids. They know that adults have more physical power. I've got a song called "Bigger, Bigger, Bigger (http://www.peteralsop.com/song/bigger-bigger-bigger)" that addresses this directly. But it's not enough to just build awareness about differences in physical power; it's also about understanding emotional power, like the threat of emotional or social retribution or violence. I think you know my song "My Body (http://www.peteralsop.com/song/my-body)."

I've used that song on and off over the years. I love its message of self-empowerment, and the fun that's in it, too. Plus, well, it's just catchy.

I recently received Kari Kovik's (https://www.heartofthechildmusic.com) new CD, *It's You I Like* (https://www.heartofthechildmusic.com/song-samples/), and she recorded a great version of "My Body" with a very sweet note attached:

> I love the way "My Body" turned out! Actually, this song gets a lot of positive feedback from my listeners. I was at a party last night where a mom of a two-month-old told me it was her mantra during her labor. That's a first! Also, a preteen used it to explain to a boy who liked her, to stop touching her. In these times especially, I think its message is so powerful, and I'm so glad I got it on this album when I did!

Here's the song (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=109qwzYz4A0) on a YouTube video if you'd like to see how I performed it in front of a live audience many years ago at a fundraiser for Kid Power.

> **My Body** (http://www.peteralsop.com/song/my-body)
> *by Peter Alsop (http://www.peteralsop.com)*
> *© 1983 Moose School Music (BMI)*
>
> *Chorus:*
> My body's nobody's body but mine!
> You run your own body, let me run mine!
>
> My nose was made to sniff and to sneeze
> To smell what I want, and to pick when I please!
> My lungs were made to hold air when I breathe,
> I am in charge of just how much I need!
>
> *Chorus*
>
> My legs were made to dance me around
> To walk and to run and to jump up and down!
> My mouth was made to blow up a balloon
> I can eat, kiss, and spit, I can whistle a tune!
>
> *Chorus*
>
> No one knows my body better than me
> It tells me, "Let's eat!" it tells me "Go pee!"
> Don't hit me or kick me, don't push or shove
> Don't hug me too hard when you show me your love
>
> *Chorus*

Sometimes it's hard to say "No!" and be strong
When those "No!" feelings come, then I know something's wrong
'Cause my body's mine from my head to my toe
Please leave it alone when you hear me say "No!"

Chorus

Secrets are fun when they're filled with surprise
But not when they hurt us with tricks, threats, and lies
Our body's one body, one voice is heard
We each sing for freedom when we sing these words!

Chorus

Thoughts to chew, indeed! I'd be curious if CMN folks, or any other people, have songs that address these current and important issues, either through a direct song or through framing connections.

Me too! Please e-mail us at stuart@stotts.com or peter@peteralsop.com and let us know. We'd also love to hear any responses or thoughts about the conversation we've started here! We look forward to hearing from you!

Presidents' Message

30 Years of Growing Children's Music

by David Heitler-Klevans and Val Smalkin
CMN Co-Presidents

Dear Children's Music Network Family,

And that's what you are! Family! CMN's relatively new co-presidency paradigm continues to be working smoothly with two people sharing the helm. Many thanks to Katherine Dines for being David's first Co-President! David will step down at the end of 2018, and Val will be joined by a new Co-President. Sharing is what CMN is all about, so it seems fitting that we now do things in this manner.

We'd like to share some of your Board of Directors' (BOD) plans for 2018. It has been a goal for many years to diversify the membership of CMN. The current Board has made this a major priority, and will focus our efforts on increasing the diversity of CMN in four areas: race/ethnicity, age, geographic region, and professional role (to broaden the representation of children's music fields beyond teachers/performers/songwriters—e.g. music therapists, librarians, DJs, etc).

To this end, we are planning a Diversity Board Retreat prior to our regularly scheduled fall meetings at the 2018 conference in Sandusky, Ohio. A professional facilitator will work with us to help identify new strategies and ideas, as well as to discover areas where we may need to change aspects of our organization to make it a more welcoming place for those who don't yet feel comfortable here. If all goes as planned, the professional facilitator will also play a role in the conference so the entire membership can benefit and help CMN grow and change in positive ways.

Our Marketing Committee, chaired by Alice Burba, is creating a new CMN Members Speakers Bureau that will provide an avenue to highlight and open new opportunities to members who provide keynote presentations, speak on panels, or present workshops at local, regional, and even international conferences. Also in the works is the membership and marketing *Let the World Be Well* video featuring all of YOU!

Our Fundraising Committee, chaired jointly by Tim Seston and Val Smalkin, conducted the first-ever February Orlando Timeshare Auction. You probably know the results as you read this! Also, echoing the idea of more diversity, the committee asked the membership to suggest themes and ideas for the Spring Fundraiser. Many ideas flew in. CMN member Dave Kinnoin even wrote a song specifically for this purpose. Thank you!

Our Membership Committee, chaired by Lisa Heintz and Linda Ronberg, is focusing on outreach to people in the Midwest and Great Lakes, leading up to our next conference in Ohio. Another priority is putting into place an ongoing

mentoring program, building on the interest and success of the program at the conference.

We want to thank everyone who made the 2017 CMN Annual International Conference in Hyannis such a huge success—especially our wonderful co-chairs, Diana Kane and Kim Wallach, and our incomparable Jane Arsham! It was truly one of the best CMN conferences, befitting of our thirtieth anniversary. It had great workshops, singing, round-robins, jamming, community building, dancing, and Ken Whiteley's keynote, all capped off by the moving Magic Penny tribute to Sally Rogers.

Our next conference will be held at the Sawmill Creek Resort (https://sawmillcreekresort.com/) in Sandusky, Ohio, October 12–14. Save those dates! Our Conference Chairs, Lisa Heintz and Joanie Calem, have been hard at work organizing all the facets of our 2018 gathering, whose theme is "Sing When the Spirit Says Sing." We hope to see you all in Sandusky in October!

Conference Reflections

by Tim Seston

Six years after attending my first CMN Annual International Conference, I was excited to be back in Hyannis, Massachusetts to celebrate friendship and our shared interest in making music with children. As a member of CMN's Board of Directors, I arrived on Thursday to dig into the work we do behind the scenes. While on stage and with children, I am energetic and confident; at parties and with large groups of adults, I tend to retreat to the sides and observe. Getting involved on the CMN Board has afforded me opportunities to share more of myself, and in turn learn more about the wonderful people in this organization.

Rich discussions were led by our Board Presidents, David Heitler-Klevans and Katherine Dines. I was excited to hear updates from Conference Chairs Kim Wallach and Diana Kane, and loved participating in the discussions about marketing and membership led by Alice Burba and Lisa Heintz, respectively. I was nervous to lead the report from our fundraising team of Susan Salidor, Val Smalkin, Jenny Murphy, and Wiley Rankin. The participation of our Advisory Board gave us all renewed energy as we finished up the final preparations for the weekend and moved to conference setup.

The conference, for me, is all the little moments: setting up the stage and putting up the quilts with Katherine, Susan, Sally Rogers, and Andy Zamenes; the time thinking about the history of CMN and being part of the present and future; a conversation after the setup with Andy and Alina Celeste about the pathways we've taken as individuals, and the shared experiences we have working in our own communities.

Dinner, followed by community dancing, was a great way to kick off the weekend. Switching partners on the fly and having small but important moments with each other is uplifting. As participants moved through that long snakelike spiral led by dance caller Robin McGalliard Nelson, dancers interacted with and welcomed each other face to face. We danced in small groups, circles, and up and down the line. It was fun sharing a dance with Katy Rydell, and another with Alex, and bantering a little with Tom Pease along the way.

Friday night singing started late and ended later. I was in the background again listening, smiling, and enjoying being on the periphery. A song about giants, "Don't Fence Me In," and some Cat Stevens late into the night were among my favorites. I left the conference center at 1:00 am and drove down the street to the quiet vacation home of a friend.

Saturday morning was full and fulfilling. I attended the back-to-back workshops of Patricia Shih and Alina Celeste to learn more about how to upgrade my online presence. Both workshops provided me with inspiration for my own business plan and future projects. Models of success are an important part of the learning process and it was wonderful to see the work of Patricia and Alina, and other artists the presenters highlighted. I spent my third workshop with Nancy Remkus, learning new songs and techniques for the elementary classroom, and came away with a few new tricks for my back pocket and a host of good resources. It was great to sing and learn in this more intimate workshop.

On to the keynote. Ken Whiteley spoke to me on several different levels. I am in the process of recording my second children's music album. His stories about finding the right musicians and recording the best possible performance from each individual were right on the money. I also started thinking about my own role as a father, teacher, and CMN Board member in the same light. It is important, to me, to help others find and share the best parts of who they are as individuals. Halfway through Ken's keynote, I took out my phone and started writing notes for a new song. Perhaps it will show up on a future album. After all, two of the songs on my 2017 album, "On a Roll" and "To Be Kind," are songs that I began writing at the 2015 conference in Zion, Illinois!

I truly enjoy seeing everyone up on stage at the Round-Robin. The performance styles and variations of our membership make the venue a highlight. For my own song, I get more nervous performing for my peers than I do for a crowd of children and their caregivers, and I've heard others speak the same truth. I missed not having my son Luke at my side this year. We had planned to sing a song we had worked on together. However, half an hour before the evening started, Oren Rosenthal asked me if I was interested in adding a violin accompaniment. Without a blink, I said yes and was excited to share "Like a Dinosaur." I have lots of fun singing it in my preschool classroom, but it was even more exciting to have the extra energy that a violin provides.

On Sunday morning, I joined Amy Conley's "Stay Strong Children" song swap that focused on songs to empower children. The songs were equally varied and allowed us all to think about the messages we can share when up on stage, in the classroom, or leading others in song. It was just the kind of intimate opportunity I was looking for on a Sunday morning after all the events that have been swarming in our heads this past year. It was clear others were looking for a similar experience. It is also nice to get a chance to do a little more singing before the Magic Penny ceremony.

I was thrilled to learn more about Sally Rogers through the voices of our membership as well as her community's tributes. Her songs share such clear

messages. I am uplifted by the work that so many of our members do back in their own hometowns. The Magic Penny is an annual reminder of the impact of what one person can do. And collectively, it is a reminder of the positive energy music creates. I loved singing the round Sally led us in at the end.

I am invigorated by every conference I attend, but it is the closing ceremony that makes me realize that I am in the right place, doing the right thing. I love that it has a consistent framework. There is time to recognize those who have worked hard to put the event together. There is time to highlight a few of our newest conference attendees. This year we got to listen a second time to a sweet song from Margot Bevington, laugh to a rousing Halloween story from Zak Morgan, and rise to our feet for one final dance as Mr. and Mrs. G shared their energetic performance.

After the conference, there is, finally, time to reflect on both the event and our membership, so full of intelligent and thoughtful people doing the kind of work I love to do. We are a long time away from gathering together in Sandusky, Ohio, but in between I will stay connected through local gatherings, our regional conference, and the vibrant online conversations. Perhaps I will venture out of New England and see a few friends on the road. I've got more to write and more to sing. Thanks to all in the Children's Music Network for being an important part of my life.

Conference photos by Kayte Deioma

Conference Reflections

by Jenny Murphy

Last October I attended my third CMN conference, the first time it was a drivable distance from New York City. Sharing the ride meant sharing stories and songs, and the four hours flew by. I was looking forward to reuniting with friends, meeting new friends, and attaching faces to the names I have seen on the forum. Every year the same tireless volunteers are back at work, and I am always so grateful for their dedication.

The busy check-in keeps me distracted until dinner, and that first meal feels tricky. I overthink it every time. Should I find and sit with people I know or seek out new friends? I wonder if others also feel this initial awkwardness. I know the tension will ease up, because it always does.

Sure enough, within hours, I am skipping down the line barefoot to the sound of our pickup dance band, instructed by our expert caller. After community dancing, I am exhausted from laughing. The ice is broken and now it's all about time management. I am determined to make it through Saturday night's Round Robin, which will be a first for me. I have no trouble sleeping.

Saturday I learn about rhythm with Randy Sauer, YouTube with Alina Celeste, and how to create children's books from songs with Devin Walker. Ideas stream through my head faster than I can take notes, and I marvel at the generosity of the presenters. I am already planning how I will use what I've learned in my own work. During the membership meeting, I join my fellow Fundraising Committee members to report on the year, and we sing our thanks to the membership with a parody of a 1987 (founding year) Whitney Houston song. The membership makes CMN's thirtieth anniversary a real birthday party with generous contributions to the "cake" and a special matching gift from Sally Rogers's brother, whom Sally calls on the phone while on stage!

The keynote is inspiring, with lots of opportunity to sing along with Ken Whiteley. I remember to tweet as instructed (#cmnsings2017 (https://twitter.com/hashtag/CMNSINGS2017)),

and am rewarded with a response from my Canadian cousin now working in China, who notices I am tweeting about a hometown favorite son. We take a moment later to catch up.

I sign up for the Round-Robin and take in the wonderful showcase of talent. It's a full day, and I pack my guitar to head back to my room, but not before David Perry stops me to fulfill my wish for an original caricature. What a great souvenir! Now, with art and guitar in hand, I pass by the open door of a circle of singers who beckon me to join. It looks like a tight squeeze, but Joanie Calem scooches over to make room for me on her chair—a welcome gesture I cannot resist. We sing old rock and roll songs. I can hardly believe I am still up! Saturday quickly becomes Sunday. After a quick nap, the celebration continues as we honor Sally Rogers and her contributions to children's music as the 2017 Magic Penny Award recipient.

It's a full and wonderful weekend, and I didn't even mention the rainbow that appeared in the sky on Saturday, but then again, why would that stand out against all the magic and love that was shared in Hyannis?

Conference photos by Kayte Deioma

Conference Keynote

Ken Whiteley

by Sandy Byer

Canadian performer, multi-instrumentalist, singer-songwriter, and award-winning record producer Ken Whiteley (http://www.kenwhiteley.com) presented a delightful and informative keynote address at the CMN national gathering in Hyannis, Massachusetts this past October. Ken began his program by leading us in the old gospel song, "You Gotta Sing When the Spirit Says Sing." This illustrated the importance of singing together in order to strengthen vital connections, build community, and foster acceptance of self and others. He emphasized that teaching what is familiar, creating the opportunity for emotional openness through improvisation, and focusing on the ultimate connection we all share by speaking to spirit were inherent in that zipper song, and that zipper songs in general are designed to connect with people right away.

Then Ken shared some of his history with us. His grandfather was a bandleader and his stepfather was a musician. He sang the song "Family Tree (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nYO90e9Dobs)" about his grandfather, and talked about the importance of memory and how things are passed along. Ken and his older brother Chris started recording when Ken was fourteen years old. He spoke about running a coffeehouse where he composed new songs every week, learning to trust his ears when accompanying a song, and making artistic decisions.

He spoke about his work learning how to program the Mariposa Folk Festival (http://www.mariposafolk.com) and his time spent performing through Mariposa In The Schools (https://mariposaintheschools.ca) (MITS). He found that performers in MITS shared ideas, and said that working in schools was exhilarating, challenging, and rewarding. Ken had fun and the kids had fun. Whether he worked in bars or in schools, he learned that audiences had to be engaged and it was his responsibility to engage them.

Then he spoke about his first collaboration with Raffi (http://www.raffinews.com/raffi/bio#.Wn86HWZTmi4) on "Singable Songs for the Very Young (http://www.raffinews.com/store/childrens-music/singable-songs#.Wn8522ZTmi4)." Raffi called Ken up and asked him to produce the recording, which was made at Daniel Lanois's (https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2016/05/daniel-lanois-interview-moogfest-bob-dylan-us-brian-eno/484421/) studio. Raffi's wife, Debbie Pike, and their friends, the Simpsons, chose the repertoire. Ken's job was to write the arrangements and select the musicians in addition to singing and playing on the recording.

Ken discussed his evolution as a record producer, then delved into what the job entails—the collaborative process between producer and artist, starting with musical ideas and song choices that fit the whole and hang together. The producer helps an artist make the best recording—and performance—possible. On each song cut, he or she works to focus the artist, to showcase the material in the best possible way, and to ensure that the artist and the material are both making connections with the audience.

Ken mentioned that a recording is not the same as a live performance, particularly because people only hear a performer on a recording. So the producer needs to enhance the auditory experience while preserving the character of the artist. He illustrated this by performing his song "Leaves (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8QgOzR7gH7M)," and then playing a recording of that song. On the recording, Ken paints auditory pictures in order to make a connection with the listener. The accompanying layers of additional music set the tone and affect how the song sounds and feels to an audience. Over the years he has learned about the science of sounds, which helps him in fitting everything together.

Then Ken turned to the new recording he had recently made with CMN member Kari Kovick, *It's You I Like.* He played some raw audio from the song "Two Little Blackbirds," which captured the immediacy of Kari singing in a room with young kids. Then he compared that recording to the mixed version. He spoke about the importance of creating trust and rapport in building a relationship with an artist, and discussed the importance of an artist being energized to generate the best performance. He believes that every artist is unique, and to encourage the best performance, a producer needs to adapt and adjust to every situation, be light on their feet, and be open and willing to respond in the moment.

More singing followed. Ken shared the song "Big Wheel, Little Wheel," which illustrated interconnecting wheels, part of a project designed for a science program. He then turned his attention to Bessie Jones (http://www.culturalequity.org/alanlomax/ce_alanlomax_profile_jonesb.php) and the Georgia Sea Island Singers (http://georgiamusic.org/the-georgia-sea-island-singers-preserve-coastal-music-traditions/). Bessie Jones had a great influence on Ken, and he shared some of her history, play party songs, shouts, and spirit of universal affirmation.

Ken spoke eloquently about the spiritual connections that can be made at so many levels through the songs we share. He illustrated the point with his song "Let My Life Be Prayer (http://blog.cmnonline.org/2018/01/23/let-my-life-be-prayer-with-ken-whiteley-on-tuneful-tuesday/)," which is about connecting with what is bigger than ourselves and transcends time or linear space.

Ken closed by saying that it was a privilege to lead others in song, as singing together co-creates circles of positive energy. He ended his wonderful presentation by leading us in one more of his songs, "Sing With Me," which took us full circle back to the beginning. We sang together, building community and strengthening connections—the very essence of CMN. What a treat!

Conference photos by Kayte Deioma

2017 Magic Penny Award

Love Is a Song

by Susan Salidor

Magic was in the air at the 2017 CMN Annual International Conference, which wisely celebrated the music and contributions of Sally Rogers as the recipient of the Magic Penny Award.

Anyone familiar with Sally's gorgeous voice and memorable songs knows the recognition is well deserved. Those of us who regularly attend the CMN annual conference have long enjoyed Sally's organizational leadership, workshops, song leading, and clever but loving requests for members to donate dollars to help CMN continue its work. This year was no different, as Sally found a way to use the Magic Penny honor to raise money for CMN by creating a $1,000 matching grant with generous assistance from her brother, who was unable to attend the festivities. Thanks, Sal!

The Magic Penny ceremony is always a joy to watch: a music-filled tribute to the honoree featuring an eclectic group of CMNers singing songs, telling stories, showing slides—all in an effort to celebrate those individuals deserving of the award named for Malvina Reynolds's song. The Magic Penny Committee works hard to bring in celebrants from outside of CMN who are close to the honoree, which makes for an intimate and entertaining occasion.

It should come as no shock that a large and exuberant group of Sally-ites was able to attend the ceremony this year. That group included current and past teaching colleagues, along with a former principal who made it clear how fortunate she was to have worked shoulder to shoulder with Sally to create and implement dynamic music curricula during their tenure together. Sally's immediate family—husband Howie Bursen and daughters Malana and Maya—were also in attendance.

Malana and Maya delighted us all as they celebrated their mother, recalling past conferences they attended as small children and singing "Love Is a Song" with Sally's longtime collaborator Claudia Schmidt (a surprise guest!). Turns out apples do not fall far from the tree: Malana and Maya are hilarious AND sing beautifully.

Sally's songs were gracefully woven throughout the ceremony. Personal favorites include "We'll Pass Them On" and "Lovely Agnes." I don't know how Sally gets through these songs without crying; I'm always a puddle after hearing either of them.

Another memorable moment was listening to Claudia and Sally sing together. Two vocal powerhouses singing Sally's songs—it doesn't get much better than that. Listening to friends make music together is a gift to any audience—the practiced, perfect harmonies complimenting the intertwined lifetimes. (Brigid Finucane and I had the pleasure of seeing Sally and Claudia perform at a Chicago-area club last year. I loved hearing Sally outside the confines of a CMN conference, and I recommend you do the same if the duo travels anywhere near your hometown.)

We are fortunate to count Sally among our membership. Her musical legacy lives in each of us, every time we share one of her songs with our audiences or our students. That is the gift we can continue to give to her in thanks for all she has given us.

Love IS a song, and CMN loves Sally Rogers.

Conference photos by Kayte Deioma

Spotlight on Outgoing Board Member

Andy Zamenes

Hometown and Region: Redwood City, CA; Northern California Region

CMN member since: 2007, although I attended many Northern California Region song circle events prior to that year.

Joined CMN's Board of Directors (BOD): 2014

What you like most about CMN: The members, a.k.a. my family

Why people should serve on the BOD: Serving on the BOD is a wonderfully enriching experience for those who wish to know more about the inner workings of a high-level nonprofit organization, and who want to make a difference on that level. Personally, I felt I should serve on the BOD because I have a voice and perspective that would prove beneficial and represent other members who shared my voice and perspective.

A favorite CMN memory:
I have many, but one that especially stands out was having the opportunity to perform "Al Tambor de la Alegria" with Alina Celeste and Peter Apel during José-Luis Orozco's Magic Penny Award ceremony at the 2016 conference in Los Gatos, CA. It was truly incredible having an opportunity to play a song for one of my mentors and do so in the spirit of his recording.

Favorite conference:
I've had great experiences at all the conferences I've been a part of, but my favorite conference was the first one I attended, 2013, also in Los Gatos. I had been a member a few years already, but had never experienced a CMN gathering of this magnitude. And I have to say that it was during this conference that I truly understood that CMN is a family and that I was part of it. There is nothing that can equal the power of that moment when you first realize you've found your "tribe."

Andy with new baby, Gio, born February 18th, 2018.

Final thoughts?
I really like Brigid (Finucane, *PIO!* editor). She's one of my favorite people. And she has the most awesome last name—although it took me a year to realize I was pronouncing it like a medication rather than using the correct pronunciation. I will expand that statement to say I have many favorite people who are members of CMN. That's just the type of people this organization attracts…good people. And I'm blessed to be a part of it.

New Sounds

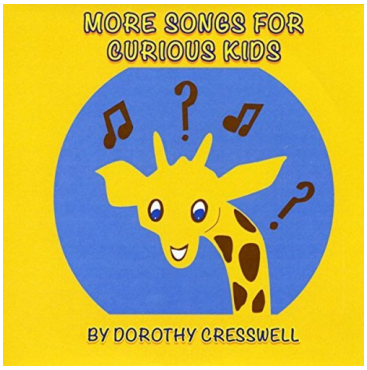
Compiled by Barbara Rice

Note: These descriptions of new releases are sent in by the CMN members mentioned, but they may have been edited by Pass It On! *staff for style, consistency, or length. The materials have not been reviewed. In addition to the sources listed, many recordings are available at local independent children's book and record stores.*

Sarah Goslee Reed
Sleep Like Fish

Sarah sang some of these songs to her kids when they were little, and now sings to their children. She wrote "Yellowbud" for her granddaughter; "Now We Are Family" for her grandson, who is adopted; and new verses to "The Timeless Rocker" for both of them. Says Sarah, "I sang 'The Ponyman' to my son during a rough visit to the dentist. 'Lullaby Time in the Desert' is a delight to sing and play—something I suspected the first time I heard it. I've been singing 'Epistle to Derroll' since college and discovered (finally!) Derroll Adams was a friend of Donovan's, a spectacular banjo player with tattoos on his fingers. 'Morningtown Ride' is one of my favorite songs by Malvina Reynolds, and 'Baby Beluga' was the only song that stopped my granddaughter from crying when she was a baby. Thank you to Camp Ned (Darryl Purpose, Paul Zollo, Tracy Grammer, and Peter Mulvey) for the prompt to write 'The Marrow of Our Bones,' and to Margaret Wise Brown's *The Sleepy Book* for the inspiration for 'Sleepy Song.'"

Sleep Like Fish is available at CD Baby as a physical CD or downloads, or by e-mailing Sarah directly (sarah@sarahgosleereed.com).



Dorothy Cresswell
More Songs For Curious Kids

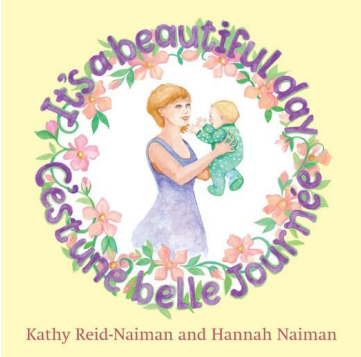
This album features Dorothy Cresswell and Katie Tolles on vocals and guitar, Pat Vittum on flute, and Garrett Sawyer on bass. The songs and story-songs are catchy and singable for young and mid-elementary aged children, and many adults enjoy them too. Most were developed around true events that lifted hopes and were important to capture and share. Many of these songs have been used as jumping off places on *The Curious Giraffe Show* to get kids singing and talking about important topics.

Songs inspired by fascinating experiences around water include "Pelican Pilot," "Mary Manatee," and "The Swift River Paddling Song." Other songs are about navigating friendships and family, helping out and reaching out to others, and stepping up to challenges. And there is the amazing true story of "Syrup in Space!"

Fellow CMNer Katie Tolles accompanies and provides harmonies for many of the songs, and "Surprised" is actually about the amazing warmth of meeting the CMN community in person at the national conferences. "Love and Laughter" is a fun round, and "Can I Help?" is a zipper song for all ages and situations. "The Human Spirit" sings of the amazing ways we make it through challenges.

The CD can be ordered or downloaded through CD Baby or ordered directly through Dorothy at dcresswell321@gmail.com.

Kathy Reid-Naiman / Kathy Reid-Naiman and Hannah Naiman
It's a Beautiful Day – C'est une belle journée



This is the second collaboration that Kathy has done with her daughter Hannah and their first bilingual recording. If you listen closely, you can hear Hannah's voice singing harmony on all of Kathy's recordings; however, this is the third album Hannah has released for children with her own voice in the lead. Their voices blend so closely that it is sometimes hard for them to tell who is singing which part. "Sweet and Low" is a perfect example of this!

Kathy Reid-Naiman's recordings have been included in Newborn Literacy Kits distributed by Early Years Centres and Library Associations in many Canadian provinces in an effort to encourage parental involvement in early learning and literacy. This recording addresses the second official Canadian language, French. There are songs, fingerplays, dances, and lullabies in both languages, which makes it perfect for young children whose parents speak either one.

Available from www.merriweather.ca (http://www.merriweather.ca/), CD Baby, or iTunes.

Barb Tilsen
Sacred Ground

Barb Tilsen writes, "I wrote the musical poem 'Sacred Ground' in the mid-nineties, reflecting on the profound connection I felt singing to my own babies as well as to those of friends and family in my musical work with young children. Combining the singing voice and the speaking voice through poetry and song, I wanted to express the wonder I felt, the deep and abiding promise to cherish, protect, and nurture these new lives and the world in which they grow." The recording also has songs for adults that Barb has written over many years. The same commitment and connection weaves throughout, giving voice to the many different ways we love and care for each other, our children, our planet, and our future.

Available from CD Baby and Apple Music.

John Keenan / Bay Song
Library Adventure

From their house, John Keenan and Jo-Anne Wilson-Keenan hear the wind and waves of Cape Cod Bay, so they call their singing group Bay Song. Their latest album, *Library Adventure*, is about the power of literacy in children's lives. This cheerful and engaging album is geared toward children in preschool and elementary school. It may be shared with parents, teachers, librarians, caregivers, and community program staff.

The songs support reading, writing, information literacy, and learning. Reflecting the diversity of the world's people, they represent a variety of musical styles, including blues, folk, rock, Latin, and country. Bay Song is joined by Cape Cod singer Anna McEntee on "Once Upon a Time," a song about traditional tales from around the world. Other Cape performers on the album include Sam Ferrara, Tim Carlin, Song Rauschenbach, and the late Jack Hart to whom the album is dedicated.

"Mirrors, Windows, and Doors" is dedicated to Rudine Sims Bishop, an esteemed authority on multicultural children's literature. She teaches us that a book can be a mirror for a child to see him or herself, a window to see other people and how they live, and a door that opens to another world, real or imagined. Two bonus tracks contain humorous stories of specially trained dogs that visit schools and libraries to motivate children to read.

The album is available from CD Baby, Amazon, and iTunes. The booklet *Library Adventure: Songs and Stories* is available in PDF format at keenanliteracy.com (http://keenanliteracy.com/).

Stuart Stotts
The Loathsome Lady and Other Love Stories

The Loathsome Lady and Other Love Stories is for older kids, ages 11 and up, who love mythology and classic stories. It includes musical accompaniment and introductions.

This recording is filled with love. Love that's joyful, love that's tragic, love that lasts, and love that ends. These stories are drawn from mythology, and they remain true and powerful today. The power of romance and attraction, the sorrow of loss, and the mystery of it all are clearly featured. What does it mean to fall in love? To be faithful? To lose love, and to find it again? People have grappled with these questions for many years, and some answers are found in old stories.

CDs are available from Amazon, CD Baby, or from Stuart directly at stuartstotts.com (https://stuartstotts.com/). All of the tracks can be streamed or downloaded on Apple music, Spotify, Amazon, and other music services.

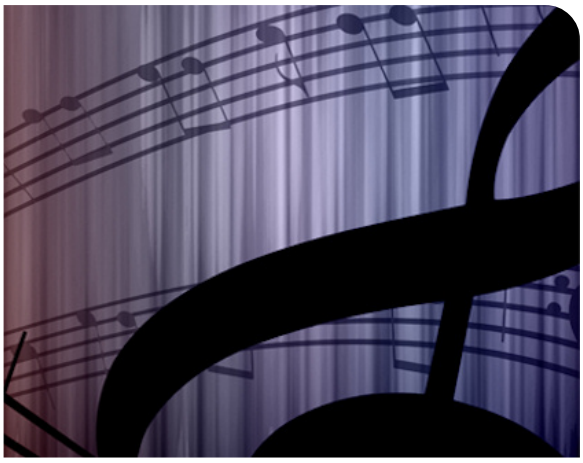
Janet Schreiner / The Cat's Pajamas
Kitten Kaboodle

Janet writes, "*Kitten Kaboodle* is the celebratory culmination of a long career, complicated by four spinal fusion operations that have often made doing what I love nearly impossible, including coming to the CMN national conferences. A 'kit' is a set of objects or tools needed to do your job. A 'caboodle' is a collection of people. With the wonderful bunch of musicians who are the Cat's Pajamas, (vintage slang for 'cool and ahead of their time') and this collection of songs that range from the ridiculous ('Chicken a la Cat') to the sublime ('One Bad Wolf'), I truly have 'the whole Kitten Kaboodle' and I couldn't be more proud."

On this new album, the Cat's Pajamas reinvents some of their most enduring songs with all the excitement of *The Music Man*: "A Big Parade" opens a capella and ends with a full second line New Orleans band. At other times, they're a Latin band, a Klezmer band, a boat full of pirates, or a kitchen full of chickens. Translating the band's live performance experience (a hybrid of kindie rock and '50s musical theatre) to a recording, *Kitten Kaboodle* is a joyous celebration of play, wonder, and FUN, perfect for children and all their grownups.

CDs are available at thecatspajamas@howlinrecords.com and
www.howlinrecords.com (http://www.howlinrecords.com).

About *Pass It On!*



Pass It On! has scores of songs to sing: all are for children, some are by children; some are serious, others lighthearted. It offers in-depth interviews with performers, teachers, musicians, and storytellers—who have included children's music legends such as Ella Jenkins, Jean Ritchie, Pete Seeger, and Raffi—and columns, news, and information about using music in the classroom, the roots, history, and growth of children's music, and much more.

CMN members receive access to all issues of *Pass It On!* **Join Now**

Staff

***PIO!* Editor**
Brigid Finucane
gardengoddess1@comcast.net

Design
Kim Arden / Graphic Alchemy
kim@graphicalchemy.com

Copy Editor
Ginger Lazarus
ginger.lazarus@gmail.com

Technical
Carl Foote / Soliv Design
cfoote@solivdesign.com

Volunteer Staff

Songs Editor
Val Smalkin
val@sillygooseandval.com

Music In Bloom
Maureen Conlin
Happynotes@aol.com

New Sounds Editor
Barbara Rice
berice@bitstream.net

Music With Older Kids
Joanie Calem
jcalem@columbus.rr.com

Pro Song
Monty Harper
monty@montyharper.com

Let's Talk Tech
Alina Celeste
Alina@alinaceleste.com

Thoughts to Chew
Peter Alsop
peter@peteralsop.com

How to Submit Something to *Pass It On!*

Articles
Pass It On! always needs stories from members about what they're doing and how they're doing it. If you are a CMN member, you are invited to share your

story. After all, that's the whole point of CMN.

Songs
Most of the songs published in *Pass It On!* are contributed by CMN members, and we welcome songs written by people from various parts of the continent or the world. Please share your works with us.

New Sounds
Children's Music Network members, please send a description of your new releases within the last year to be included on the New Sounds page.

Interested? Read our guidelines for submission to *Pass It On!*

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